THE MASTER MUSICIANS · STORIES of ROMANTIC LIVES

by Cuthbert Hadden

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MASTER MUSICIANS

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MADAME SCHUMANN

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MASTER MUSICIANS

a book for Players, Singers & Listeners

J. Cuthbert Hadden

AUTHOR OF 'CHOPIN,' 'HAYDN,'
'THE OPERAS OF WAGNER,' ETC.

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I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

A TRIBUTE OF AFFECTION AND GRATITUDE

PREFACE

THE only thing requiring to be said by way of preface to this book is, that it does not pretend to be critical. Technicalities have been expressly avoided. It is about the men themselves rather than about their music that I have chosen to write. Further, I have had in view the amateur rather than the professional, and the young reader rather than the adult; though I would fain hope that the book may interest all who love and practise the art of Bach and Beethoven.

J. C. H.

EDINBURGH, *September* 1909.

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WHEN MUSIC, HEAVENLY MAID, WAS YOUNG

> The study of the history of music, seconded by hearing the actual performance of the masterpieces of different epochs, will prove the most rapid and effectual cure for conceit and vanity.—SCHUMANN.

A CELEBRATED musician once declared that nobody worth considering as a composer lived before the time of Handel and Bach. Painting, sculpture, architecture, decorative work of various kinds: all, he said, produced masterpieces which we still value and admire, though they are now more than two thousand years old. But go back even two hundred and fifty years in music, and we feel as if we were among things crude and incomplete. That was the celebrated musician's verdict. In his view, Music, heavenly maid, was born when Handel and Bach were born—then, and not before.

In a sense it is true; so true that Bach, who, like Handel, was born in 1685, is often called "the father of music." But it would never do to ignore entirely Bach's and Handel's predecessors, unfamiliar though most of their names are now. There are names of old masters—composers and theorists—that every musical amateur ought to know, because of the services they rendered towards the development of the art. Art of all kinds is an evolution, and the beginnings of musical composition carry us to a time a good long way before that last decade of the seventeenth century which produced Handel and Bach.

In the earlier days, before Handel and Bach, music was chiefly in the hands of churchmen, which is readily explained by the fact that the churchmen were then almost the only people of education and culture. It is thus that St. Ambrose and St. Gregory have come to be named and honoured in musical history. Ambrose was Archbishop of Milan from 374 to 397. He took a keen interest in church music, and did much for its advancement. It was he who devised a general system of chanting known from his name as the Ambrosian Chant. When Ambrose died, church music again deteriorated.

Two hundred years later, a reformer arose in the person of Pope Gregory, surnamed the Great. Most musical people have heard of "Gregorians," a mediæval medium of chanting the psalms which is still employed in some churches where the ritual is "high." The taste for Gregorians, like the taste for olives, has to be cultivated. Many share the feeling of the American who, when he was told that David himself sang his psalms to Gregorians, said he understood for the first time why Saul threw the javelin at him! That, then, is what we owe to Gregory the Great. It was during his time also that the Romans reduced their nomenclature of music to the first seven letters of the alphabet —a nomenclature which has been preserved intact through the long intervening centuries. They had practically no musical notation as yet—only a system of dots and scratches which look as mysterious to us as the hieroglyphics on Cleopatra's Needle or the symbols on a China tea-chest. The five-line staff was quite unknown, and sharps and flats were lying far away in the bosom of the future.

It was Guido of Arezzo, in Tuscany, a learned monk of the eleventh century, and Franco of Cologne, who flourished about the year 1200, who, between them, laid the foundations of our present system of musical writing. Guido devised a four-line staff, and two of the lines were coloured. One line was yellow (sometimes green), and its purpose was to fix the place of the note C. Another line was red, and the red line fixed the place of F. It is from this practice of the old monk that our familiar treble and bass clefs are derived. Nor did Guido's services to music end here. We may fairly call him the inventor of sol-fa, for he was the first to employ the syllables *ut* (now *doh*), *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*, *la*. These syllables he derived from the following Latin lines, which he made his pupils sing to a melody so arranged that each line began with the note it was used to represent:

Ut queant laxis
Resonare fibris
Mira gestorum
Famuli tuorum
Solve polluti
Labii reatum.

The syllable *si*, for the seventh of the scale, was not introduced till so late as the seventeenth century, but it would never have been introduced, and probably we would never have had a sol-fa notation at all, except for Guido of Arezzo.

And what about Franco? Well, *his* part in the musical advance applied mainly to the devising of notes of different shapes to express different time lengths. Before Franco's day there was no way of clearly representing time in musical notation ; no way of showing, for example, the difference between a note which should be four beats long and one which should be two beats. It is difficult to imagine such an inconvenience now, and we have to thank Franco for saving us from it. The breve (seldom seen) and the semibreve come down to us from him, though he called them the "brevis" and the "semibrevis." He invented "rests" too ; and he was the first to divide time into what we call "dual" and "triple." Dual time has two beats in the bar, as in a polka ; and triple time has three beats, as in a waltz. Franco made this distinction before anybody else did ; and he had a quaint idea that all church music should be written in triple time because its three beats correspond with the Holy Trinity, three persons in one God.

Thus, then, the world had arrived at a tolerably clear and intelligible method of representing music to the eye. Still, there had been, so far, no composers, as we regard the term. It was not until the so-called Netherlands School arose in the fourteenth century that anything significant was done in musical composition. We may think it curious now that Belgium and Holland, and not Germany, which has given us nearly all our really great composers, should have been the first home of music the modern art. But the wind bloweth where it listeth, and there were notable musicians in other lands before Germany produced Handel and Bach.

There was, first of all, Josquin des Prés, who, at the height of his maturity, as much overtopped his contemporaries as Beethoven overtopped all other composers at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Des Prés's music is even yet heard occasionally, and according to an admirer is "still ravishing to the ear." He was born at Condé about 1450, and lived till 1521. He enjoyed immense popularity in his day, first as a singer in the Pope's Chapel at Rome, and later as chapel-master to Louis XII. of France. It was complained indeed that there was "only Josquin in Italy, only Josquin in France, only Josquin in Germany; in Flanders, in Bohemia, in Hungary, in Spain, only Josquin." Luther, the great Reformer, said, "Josquin is a master of the notes; they have to do as he wills, while other composers must do as the notes will." Some historians would have us accept him as "the first composer of modern music." However that may be, he was a real pioneer composer, and greatly influenced the trend and history of the art.

One of his pupils, a Belgian called Adrian Willaert (1490-1563), is credited with the introduction of the madrigal. The madrigal, a particular kind of part-song, became exceedingly popular in England towards the end of the sixteenth century. Nobody writes madrigals nowadays, for they are held to be old-fashioned. But who has not heard of "Down in a flowery vale," "In going to my lonesome bed," and "Flora gave me fairest flowers"? These are all madrigals, and if we owe them indirectly to Adrian Willaert, then we owe him a big debt. Willaert had a contemporary who was much more distinguished. This was Orlando Lasso (1520-1594), born at Mons, in Belgium. They called him the "Prince of Music," and he was celebrated all over Europe, employed and honoured by kings and nobles. If it be true, as is said, that he wrote 2500 works, he was one of the most prolific composers who ever lived. Barring one quaintly beautiful madrigal, nothing of his is heard in public to-day. But he played a considerable part in the advance of his art, for he introduced the chromatic element into composition, and it is from him that we have derived such indispensable musical terms as *Allegro* and *Adagio*.

But the real glory of those early times was Palestrina (1514-1594), who was born to effect a complete revolution in the style of musical composition for the church. He is the first composer who is treated seriously by the musical historians, though he is rather a herald of the really great composers than one of the greatest in his own person. When quite young, he went by a variety of names, but, as his fame gradually increased, he began to be called after the little place near Rome where he was born. Tourists go to Palestrina to-day to see it just for his sake. It is the type of a hill-town in the Sabine country. The traveller finds it difficult of access, but it was meant to be so when it was built, like so many neighbour cities, on a peak. It carries Roman mosaics in perfect preservation in an amphitheatre on the top of its steep streets, whence you might drop an apple, or almost, straight into the Campagna at your feet. Seen thence, the dome of St. Peter's looks like a dim, clouded pearl on the far horizon, and you may nearly discern the statues on the Lateran pricking into the sky. A recent visitor tells that all the people are poor, most of them beautiful, and the abounding children look as though they must fall into the plain. Out of this nest of isolated poverty came the greatest musical genius of his time, the creator of the true religious style.

As a youth Palestrina had studied music in Rome, and before he was thirty he was choirmaster in the chapel of Julius II., the fiery Pope who figures so prominently in the life-story of Michael Angelo. The composer had married young and happily, yet it turned out as if he should not have married at all. "With his wife," says his biographer, "he suffered the most strait penuries of his life, with her he sustained the most cruel afflictions of his spirit, and with her also he ate the hard crust of sorrow." The marriage became a misfortune in this way: Pope Julius died, and his successor, objecting to married men as singers in the chapel, discharged Palestrina, who had to take a poorly-paid post in another church.

But then, in 1562, came the sittings of that famous Council of Trent which determined so many points in church procedure and polity. The Council expressed itself as dissatisfied with the prevailing style of church music. It was too frivolous, too much tinged with secularity, they said. In fact, they condemned it root and branch, and proclaimed the need for a higher and purer style. Now came Palestrina's opportunity. He had proved himself a master of music, and the Pope suggested to him that he should produce a Mass in the manner demanded by the Council. Palestrina jumped at the idea, and by 1565 had completed three Masses, which a Commission of Cardinals declared to be the very thing that was wanted to save church music from the utter degradation with which it had been threatened. Casting aside the learned yet puerile combinations which had been in vogue, Palestrina wrote in a style pure and serene, free from agitation or excitement, with no sentimentality and no affectation. We who live in the strenuous atmosphere of the twentieth century can hardly get into the condition of mind to understand and feel the almost angelic beauty and sweetness of his work, though indeed there are few chances of hearing it. We must be content to know that, though perhaps not actively or directly, it continues to influence and correct the art of all the more serious-minded church composers. Palestrina died in the fulness of his fame in February 1594, when Shakespeare was thirty years old, and was just getting into print for the first time.

After Palestrina, and before Bach and Handel, there are no Continental composers of sufficient note to detain us; though it was within this period that the great forms of opera and oratorio sprang into being. Indeed, the first opera ever written was produced in the very year of Palestrina's death. This was *Dafne*, composed by Jacopo Peri, one of a Florentine coterie of *dilettanti*. It was a very primitive kind of work, with only four instruments (harpsichord, viol di gamba, lute, and harp) for accompaniment. But it proved a huge success, and the result was a second opera, *Eurydice*, produced on the occasion of the marriage of Mary de Medicis with Henry IV. of France in 1600. Peri is described as having "an aureole of notoriously ardent hair," whatever that may mean. He was a very avaricious person. Of noble birth himself, he grew rich on the favour of the Medicis, and added to his wealth by marrying a fine lady who brought with her a very handsome *dot*.

Peri's operas were, of course, mere experiments. It was left for Claudio Monteverde (1566-1650), a Milanese musician, to give a pronounced form to the opera. Monteverde has been glowingly described as "the first opera composer by the grace of God, a real musical genius, the father of instrumentation." Less enthusiastically, we may call him the Wagner of his time, since in his harmonies and general style he was so daringly in advance of his age. Thus, in an opera of 1624, he introduced instrumental effects which were almost Wagnerian in their attempts to convey to listeners an idea of the feelings animating the several characters. He indicates, for instance, the galloping of horses and the fierceness of their riders pretty much as Wagner does in his Ride of the Valkyries. Monteverde had many competitors in opera, but he easily eclipsed them all, and in a few years gave opera quite a new complexion. It is said that he entered the church after the death of his wife, when he was about sixty-five years of age. By and by the Neapolitan Alessandro Scarlatti (1659-1725) burst on the scene and established the real Italian opera, which has now held sway for so many years in so many different countries.

What Monteverde did for opera was done for oratorio by Giacomo Carissimi (1582-1672), who often wrote for the voices in that broad and simple style which Handel popularised a whole century later. The development of oratorio, in fact, progressed side by side with the development of opera. But oratorio has had a much shorter active existence than opera. The opera, like Tennyson's brook, seems destined to go on for ever, while the oratorio really lives only in the masterpieces of Handel and Mendelssohn, with an occasional spurt from Haydn. Practically, as regards its form, Handel said the last word in oratorio; whereas the opera was in a state of evolution right up to the time of Wagner, if it is not in a state of evolution even now.

And what was England doing for music all this time? Not very much that has proved permanent. England had a host of composers of all kinds, but their names are, for the most part, altogether unknown in the great world of music. Some call this—the time before Handel and Bach—the golden age of English music; reminding us that in those far-away days flourished such composers as John Dunstable, Christopher Tye, Thomas Tallis, William Byrde, Richard Farrant, John Dowland, Orlando Gibbons, John Bull, Henry Lawes, Jeremiah Clark, and William Croft, among many more. These names, or some of them, are interesting enough. Thus Tye was the music-master of Queen Elizabeth, who prided herself upon the playing of the virginals, a primitive precursor of the piano. Byrde, also, was intimately connected with the Queen, being one of the chief contributors to her *Virginal Book*. Tallis survives in the common-metre church tune bearing his name, as well as in the tune of the evening hymn, "All praise to Thee, my God, this night." To John Bull some are inclined to attribute (and very properly, considering his name) the tune of "God save the King." Dowland would be worth mentioning if only because Shakespeare made a sonnet about him—"If music and sweet poetry agree"; and Henry Lawes is interesting for a similar reason, namely, that Milton celebrated him in the lines—

> Harry, whose tuneful and well-measured notes
> First taught our English music how to span
> Words with just note and accent.

Jeremiah Clark wrote cathedral music which is still performed, and William Croft some noble anthems and some hymn-tunes, such as "Hanover" and "St. Anne," that are heard regularly in all the churches.

Every one of these musicians was born before Handel, and every one of them did something notable, each in his own way, though, comparatively, it was a small way.

There is, in truth, but one really great name in English music before the days of Handel and Bach. That is the name of Henry Purcell, who died ten years after these masters were born. There are those who contend that Purcell is the only real musical genius Britain has ever produced. One recent writer calls him "our last great musician," which is not complimentary to later composers! He was a sort of musical Shakespeare of his time, and hardly more is known of him than we know of the man who wrote *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*. Born in 1658, he lived in the London of Samuel Pepys, the diarist, and died in 1695, having written complimentary odes to three Kings—Charles II., James II., and William III. Besides these odes, he wrote "piles of instrumental music, a fair heap of anthems and songs, and interludes and overtures for some forty odd plays." This is really all that we know about Henry Purcell. But it is mildly interesting to note that he was made organist of Westminster Abbey (where he is buried) at the early age of eighteen, and that he met his death at thirty-seven (such is the story) by his wife shutting him out one cold winter night because he came home late. Perhaps it was a feeling of remorse that led the widow to collect her husband's compositions and publish them with a highly laudatory dedication. The Abbey epitaph ought to have pleased her at any rate: "Here lyes Henry Purcell, Esquire, who left this life, and is gone to that blessed place where only his harmony can be exceeded."

Purcell's works appeal mainly to musicians and musical antiquaries, for they are seldom performed. He had a passion for expressing words in notes; as when, in his setting of the text, "They that go down to the sea in ships," he plunges the bass down a couple of octaves, and then at the words "up to heaven," keeps him straining his voice on a high dotted crotchet. Composers much greater than Purcell went in for musical word-painting of that kind. The "plagues" in Handel's *Israel in Egypt* are full of far-fetched musical word-pictures; Haydn's *Creation* has "a long and sinuous worm" and a sportive leviathan; Mendelssohn tries to reproduce the bray of the donkey in his *Midsummer Night's Dream*; and even Beethoven introduces a real cuckoo into his Pastoral Symphony. We should regard this sort of thing as childish now. But Purcell at least had no idea of being childish. He was perfectly serious, and though we cannot possibly agree with Dr. Burney, the musical historian, that in passion and expression his vocal music is "as superior to Handel's as an original poem to a translation," we must nevertheless admit that this man who was so prematurely cut off was one of the greatest musicians England has given birth to. And so, with that comforting statement to close our introductory survey, let us turn to Handel and Bach and the line of masters who came after them.

GEORGE FREDERICK HANDEL: THE MAKER OF THE *MESSIAH*

> Remember Handel? Who, that was not born
> Deaf as the dead to harmony, forgets,
> Or can, the more than Homer of his age?
>
> COWPER.

HANDEL and Bach were the earliest of the great composers whose works are regularly performed to-day. Yet how little the average amateur knows about them! This is especially curious in the case of Handel, for Handel was English in everything but the accident of his birth. He spent nearly all his working life in England; he had himself "naturalised" as an Englishman; he wrote nearly every one of his notable works in England and to English words; and, gathering up all that had gone before him in English music, he embodied it in himself, and practically became the father of modern English composition. His remains rest with England's own great in Westminster Abbey, and the recurrent Handel Festivals at the Crystal Palace, to say nothing of repeated performances of the *Messiah* by all the leading choral societies, keep his name and his music green.

George Frederick Handel was born at the quaint little town of Halle, about an hour's ride from Leipzig, in February 1685. His father, then sixty-three years old, was one of those oft-mentioned barbers who were at the same time surgeons and dentists. He meant his George Frederick to be a lawyer, for music seemed to him an undignified sort of amusement, fit only for Italian fiddlers and French buffoons. Handel himself had a reminder of this idea when at Oxford, many years later, he and his company of fellow-professionals were described by one of the papers as "a lousy crew." Barber Handel showed himself very determined on the point. When his boy evinced an unmistakable bent for music, the barber did everything he could to thwart it. All musical instruments were put out of reach, and George was even kept from school in case he should there learn something of the tabooed art of St. Cecilia.

But George had managed to drag a rickety spinet (a weak-sounding kind of piano) away up to the attic where he slept, and when the rest of the household were in bed he would creep quietly to the instrument and exercise his tiny fingers until they ached and his eyes blinked. In this way he succeeded in teaching himself to play before any one knew anything about it. The full discovery came about rather curiously Young Handel had a half-brother in the service of the Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, not far from Halle. One day, in 1692, the father set off on a visit to the Duke's place. He had not gone far when he found that his seven-year-old George was running after the coach, and having no heart to turn the boy back, he took him along. The trifling circumstance formed the turning point in Handel's career. One day, at Saxe-Weissenfels, he stole unnoticed to the organ in the Duke's chapel. He began playing. The Duke happened to be near. He was a musical man, and he remarked the unusual touch of the little fingers. That decided it. He sent for Doctor Handel, told him he must not think of making a lawyer of his son, and practically gave orders that he should be set to the study of music at once. So young Handel was put to work with the cathedral organist at Halle. He laboured at harmony and counterpoint, and canon and fugue, and all the other dry bones of music; perfected himself on the organ and the harpsichord (another forerunner of the piano); learnt the violin and the oboe; and began to compose.

Presently his father died, and having to get his own living he went to Hamburg, at that time the most musical city in Germany, as a violinist at the opera. Here he drudged away for a while, always looking for a better and more congenial appointment. He had made friends with Johann Mattheson, a versatile musician then singing as a tenor at the opera. One day Mattheson and he started on what proved to be a very amusing errand to Lübeck. An organist's post had been declared vacant, and the pair determined to try for it. Unfortunately, when they arrived at Lübeck, they found that there was an impossible stipulation:

the successful candidate had to marry the daughter of the retiring organist! One look at the lady was enough. "She was not fair to see, and her years were thirty-four," while Handel was only eighteen. A speedy return to Hamburg was the result of the interview. Handel, it may be said at once, remained a bachelor to the end of his life. An Italian lady took his fancy as a young man, and he became engaged to her, but for some reason the match was broken off. Subsequently, he would have married an English lady of large fortune if she had not insisted that he must give up his profession. Perhaps it is as well that he remained unmated. He was an irascible person, and he might have done as Beethoven did with his cook, and thrown the soup in his wife's face when something went wrong with his temper.

It was at Hamburg that Handel produced his first operas. But there is no occasion to talk of his operas, for they are all completely forgotten now, though airs from some of them are occasionally sung. One incident of the Hamburg period must, however, be mentioned. Mattheson and Handel were both crack harpsichordists, and the harpsichord was an essential of the theatre orchestra in those days. At the opera Handel usually played the violin, while Mattheson played the harpsichord. But Mattheson had written an opera, *Cleopatra*, which was being staged at Hamburg. He was to sing in it himself, so Handel took his place at the harpsichord. But Mattheson, it appeared, sometimes did the double duty of playing on the stage as well as in the band; and on this occasion, after the death of Antony, he came down into the orchestra and demanded his accustomed seat there. Handel refused to rise, and a quarrel immediately ensued. Nothing less than a duel could be expected, and as soon as they were outside the theatre, the rivals drew their swords and began slashing at each other. Mattheson was the better fencer, and Handel was only saved to posterity by a big brass button on his coat, which broke the point of Mattheson's sword.

Having put past some money, Handel now set off on a pilgrimage to Italy, the "land of song." He arrived in Florence in 1707, and he remained in Italy, studying her native masters, composing operas and other works, for about three years. Artistically this visit was of great use to him, adding the grace of a refined, melodious style to the bold, majestic, but somewhat rugged strength of his work as a German of the somewhat severe type. When he left Italy in 1709, it was for Hanover. He had met the Elector of Hanover (the future George I.) at Venice, and was invited to visit the Court. On more intimate acquaintance, the Elector conceived a strong liking for him, and made him his kapellmeister at a salary of £300 a year. He would allow Handel, he said, a year's holiday whenever he asked for it. Handel asked for the holiday straight away, and in the winter of 1710 he saw London, his future home, for the first time. Little can he have thought then of the English capital as the scene of his greatest artistic triumphs, or of how the English people were to become the most ardent admirers of his genius. Very likely he looked upon this first visit as a mere pleasure-trip ; yet the ultimate outcome was a series of masterpieces in oratorio without which Handel's genius would never have been fully revealed, and in the absence of which his name would exist now only in the dull pages of musical history.

When Handel came to England, Purcell had been dead for fifteen years. Arne, the composer of "Rule, Britannia!" was only just born, and the few good men who were living and working were devoted almost entirely to minor forms like the anthem, the glee, and the madrigal. The time was therefore ripe for a genius like Handel. Opera was in such a low state that one work actually contained a part for a pig. Aaron Hill, the manager of the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket, got hold of Handel at once and asked him to write an opera for his establishment. Rinaldo was chosen for a subject, and Handel went to work with such eagerness that the poor librettist could not provide him with the words fast enough. When the thing was finished, the librettist made this plaintive appeal to the public : "I implore you to consider the speed I have had to work, and if my performance does not deserve your praises, at all events do not refuse it your compassion ; for Herr Handel, the Orpheus of our age, has scarcely given me time to write while composing the music ; and I have been stupefied to see an entire opera set to harmony with the highest degree of perfection in no more than a fortnight." We shall hear more of the phenomenal rapidity with which Handel composed. *Rinaldo* proved to be the finest opera that had ever been produced in England, and its success was quite brilliant. Walsh, the London music-seller, published it soon after, and made so much more out of it than Handel himself, that Handel observed to him: "You shall compose the next opera and I will publish it."

By this single work Handel had fully established his fame in London. But Handel himself was not established there just yet. He was drawing the Hanover salary, and he must return to his Hanover duties. In reality, he remained only sixteen months at Hanover, which he found excessively dull after London. He asked a fresh leave of absence and came back to us in 1712. That year he was out with a new opera at the Haymarket; wrote an Ode for Queen Anne's Birthday in 1713; and was commissioned by her Majesty to compose a Te Deum and Jubilate to celebrate the Peace of Utrecht the same year. Anne was so delighted that she gave Handel a pension of £200 a year. Thus provided for, the composer stayed on in London, indifferent about his Hanover engagement. He only realised the awkwardness of his situation when Queen Anne died and the Elector came over from Hanover to be crowned as George I. He found himself persistently ignored at Court, the King declining to have any intercourse with him. A reconciliation was at length effected in this way: Baron Kielmansegge, a mutual friend of King and composer, having been invited to form one of the Court party in an excursion on the Thames, advised Handel to prepare music for the occasion. Handel took the hint and wrote what is known as his *Water Music*. It was performed in a boat which followed the royal barge, Handel himself conducting. George was charmed with the effect, and inquiring as to the source of the music, was told all about it by Kielmansegge, who at the same time interceded on Handel's behalf. George could hold out no longer. He took Handel metaphorically to his arms, and bestowed on him a further pension of £200 a year.

Handel made a visit to the Continent in 1716, but he was back in London in 1717, and in London he remained ever after. He secured an important appointment as musical director to the magnificent Duke of Chandos, who had built himself a splendid mansion at Cannons, in the suburbs. The Duke had a private chapel where a daily musical service was performed by "a choir of voices and instruments superior in excellence and numbers to that of any sovereign potentate in Europe." Handel's duty was to train and lead the choir, to play the organ, and write music for the chapel. It was here that he wrote *Esther*, the first of those great oratorios (itself not of the great) upon which his fame rests. The Duke paid him £1000 for it, though it was performed at Cannons only three or four times. It was at Cannons, too, that *Acis and Galatea* was written. And then there was the famous pianoforte piece known as *The Harmonious Blacksmith*, one of a *suite des pièces* written for the harpsichord. There is a familiar but rather questionable story connecting it with one

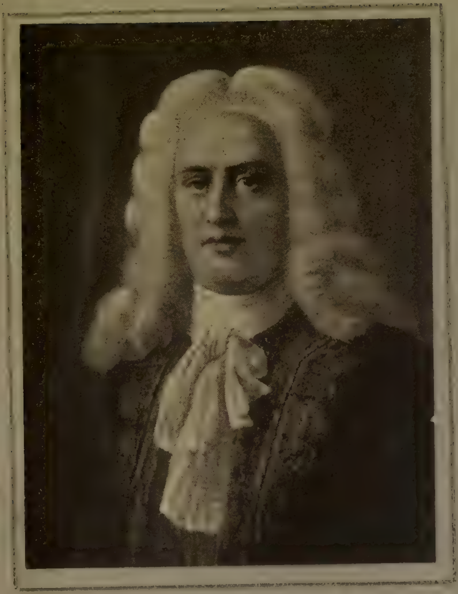
Powell, a blacksmith at Edgware in Handel's time. The story is that one day, during a heavy shower, Handel took shelter in the blacksmith's, and was so charmed with the musical sound of the blacksmith's hammer on the anvil that he went home and wrote the air and its variations. But Handel's biographers tell us that this particular piece was almost certainly written before Handel went to Cannons at all; and it is significant that the title of *Harmonious Blacksmith* was given to it, not by Handel himself, but by a music publisher in Bath whose father was a blacksmith and was fond of the tune. The anvil story is a pretty story, and one hesitates to spoil it, but it has really no solid foundation.

Handel's service with the Duke of Chandos continued until 1721, but two years before that he had embarked on a gigantic operatic enterprise under the title of the Royal Academy of Music. For this undertaking he wrote a large number of operas, all long since buried in oblivion, but the finances of the enterprise proved so disastrous that he twice became bankrupt. In any readable account of Handel's career, the main interest of this period is the way he managed his operatic vocal team. Singers are proverbially touchy and troublesome; none more so than operatic singers, who are a continual thorn in the flesh of the *impresario*. In Handel they found their match—and more. His first encounter was with Francesca Cuzzoni, a distinguished Italian vocalist, who, from being the reigning star of her day, ended by making silk buttons for a living. Handel had written an air expressly for her, and she flatly refused to sing it. This was too much. It was a case of Greek meeting Greek. "I know, madam, that you are a very devil," roared Handel, "but I will let you see that I am Beelzebub, the prince of devils." And with that he seized her in his arms and was preparing to throw her out of the window, when she eagerly declared that she would sing.

Something of the same kind happened with Carestini, who declined to sing an air which Handel had written purposely to show off his voice. "You dog!" he cried, "don't I know better as yourself what is good for you to sing? If you will not sing all the songs I give you, I will not pay you ein stiver." And, as had happened with Cuzzoni, that particular song was the one in which Carestini produced his greatest effect.

Handel's characteristic boldness was further illustrated by his engagement of Faustina, who was Cuzzoni's deadly rival—just as if Jenny Lind and Madame Patti had been pitted against each other. How Handel could have hoped to get the pair into the same opera "cast" it is impossible to imagine. Horace Walpole tells a very amusing story of his mother's attempts to keep the peace between them. On Sundays, when Sir Robert Walpole was absent, she used to invite them both to dinner, and by discreet diplomacy obtained sufficient concession from both sides to ensure a pleasant meeting. One evening, however, when all the rank and fashion of London were present at one of her receptions, she found it so difficult to settle the question of precedence between the rivals that she had almost given up all hope of hearing them sing, when, by a lucky inspiration, she spirited Faustina away to a distant room under pretence of showing her some curious china. Cuzzoni, assuming that her opponent had gone, consented to sing; and when *her* songs were finished, Lady Walpole armed her away upon a similar pretext, while the company listened to Faustina!

Of course at the opera there could be no expedients of that kind, and Handel's trick was to compose duets for the rivals, in which the voice parts were so nicely balanced and crossed each other so frequently, for the purpose of giving each singer the upper part by turns, that nobody could tell which was singing first and which second. Each of these stars received two thousand guineas per annum for her services. It is recorded that Cuzzoni took a solemn oath never to sing for less than Faustina; and that Handel, wishing to get rid of her, offered her two thousand guineas and Faustina two thousand and one, whereupon she retired. As a matter of fact, Handel was never out of hot water with his singers. There is a story of one getting into a passion because the composer did not accompany him to his taste. "If you do not change your style of accompaniment," cried the angry vocalist, "I will jump upon the harpsichord and smash it." Handel looked up with a twinkle in his eye. "Let me know when you will do that," he replied, "and I will advertise it. I am sure more people will come to see you jump than will come to hear you sing."



HANDEL

It is curious to reflect upon the consequences of Handel's financial failures with opera. There was something in the form as well as in the subjects of oratorio music especially appropriate to Handel's genius; yet such were the force of habit and the tyranny of fashion that if Handel had made money by his operas he would probably have gone on writing operas and nothing else to the end of his days. The Fates had happily ordered it otherwise. Julius Cæsar won all his great victories after he was fifty. When the earlier of his great oratorios were written, Handel had reached the same epoch of life—a time when genius is supposed to have lost some of its vigour, when both the mental and the physical powers are at least not in the ascendant. But Handel was a marvel.

He had written about forty operas, besides other works, when, in 1738, he turned finally to oratorio, and produced his *Saul*, composed in a little over two months. *Saul* is never heard now, but everybody knows its deeply impressive "Dead March," which occurs towards the end, just after the news of the death of Saul and Jonathan is brought to David. A year later came *Israel in Egypt* (written in fifteen days), which, after the *Messiah* and *Judas Maccabæus*, is perhaps the most popular and the most frequently performed of all Handel's oratorios. It was not a great success when first given in London in 1739, but that was due largely to the fact that the chorus-singing of Handel's time was quite unequal to a work so gigantic in conception and execution. Choruses were comparatively small then, and were, besides, composed entirely of male voices.

Handel was naturally disappointed with the London reception of *Israel*; and so, when he had completed his *Messiah*, the greatest of all his oratorios, he carried the score to Dublin, and had the work performed there for the first time, in April 1742. The manuscript is still in existence, and from dates inscribed on it we gather that the entire work was begun and completed within twenty-three days! The Dublin audience had been called together by the following advertisement: "For the Relief of the Prisoners in the several Gaols, and for the Support of Mercer's Hospital, in Stephen's Street, and of the Charitable Infirmary on the Inn's Quay, on Monday, the 13th of April, will be performed at the Musick Hall at Fishamble Street, Mr. Handell's new Grand Oratorio, called 'The Messiah,' in which the Gentlemen of the Choirs of both Cathedrals will assist, with some Concertos on the Organ by Mr. Handell." The advertisement further requested the ladies to come without their hoops and the gentlemen without their swords, which would "enable the stewards to seat seven hundred persons instead of six." Even so late as Haydn's visits to London these impedimenta of the ladies gave serious concern to concert makers. Thus we are told that the royal Princesses wore hoops so wide that the Court attendants had to hold up the monstrosities in order to enable their wearers to pass through the doorways. And yet we hear continual talk about a proposed revival of the crinoline!

"Mr. Handell's" oratorio was received with extraordinary fervour by the Dublin people. A clergyman in the audience is stated to have so far forgotten himself as to exclaim at the close of one of Mrs. Cibber's airs, "Woman, for this be all thy sins forgiven thee!" Another enthusiast dropped into poetry and delivered himself of the following couplet:

To harmony like *his* celestial power was given,
To exalt the soul from earth and make of hell a heaven.

A sum of £400 was realised by the performance, which, deducting only £20 for expenses, was divided among the three institutions named in the advertisement. It was the most triumphant event in Handel's life. Already he had lost a fortune by Italian opera; the colossal *Israel in Egypt* had been received with cold indifference. But now all this was amply atoned for, and Handel stood approved as the greatest composer of the greatest oratorio that had ever been written. The *Messiah* was not performed in London until March 1743, when it was produced at Covent Garden. It had at first nothing like the success it achieved in Dublin, but gradually it got to be appreciated, and its position now is known to all lovers of music.

Back in London in 1742, Handel went on with his oratorio work, producing *Samson*, *Judas Maccabæus*, *Solomon*, *Theodora*, and *Jephtha*. Although these are not well known, certain portions of them are familiar enough: such, for instance, as "Honour and Arms" and "Let the bright Seraphim" from *Samson*; the beautiful soprano air "Angels, ever bright and fair," from *Theodora*; the equally beautiful "Waft her, angels, to the skies," from *Jephtha*; and "See, the conquering hero comes," from *Judas Maccabæus*. Of this latter a story may be told. Soon after Handel had completed it, he played it to a friend and asked him how he liked it. "Not so well as some other things of yours," was the candid reply. "Nor I, either," said Handel, "but you will live to see it a greater favourite with the people than some of my finer things." The truth of which forecast has been abundantly proved.

It was in 1751 that *Jephtha*, the last of the long line of Handel oratorios (22 in all), was composed. By this time the master's eyesight was seriously failing. Three painful operations ended in total blindness, and Handel, heartbroken over the misfortune, began to anticipate, if not to wish for, his end. His powers gradually weakened, and his thoughts continually reverted to death. He said he would like to die on Good Friday, that he might meet his Lord and Saviour on the day of His crucifixion. His desire was granted, for it was on the Good Friday of 1759 (April 13) that his spirit fled. He had conducted his *Messiah* seven days before, and the effort proved too much. His body was laid in the Abbey, where a monument may be seen, representing him in the act of writing "I know that my Redeemer liveth," one of the best-known solos in his great oratorio. In spite of his repeated losses, he died a rich man. He not only paid all his debts, but left £20,000, of which £1000 was bequeathed to the Royal Society of Musicians.

In person and character Handel was, like his music, large and powerful. He was somewhat unwieldy in his movements, but he had a countenance full of fire and dignity. He was imperious in the extreme, with a temper at times perfectly volcanic. In illustration of this, one typical anecdote may be chosen from many. Handel's nerves were too irritable to stand the sound of tuning, and his players therefore tuned their instruments before he arrived. One evening, when the Prince of Wales was expected to be present, some wag, for a piece of fun, untuned them all. When the Prince arrived, Handel gave the signal to begin *con spirito*, but such was the horrible discord that the enraged conductor started up from his seat, and, having overturned a double-bass that stood in the way, seized a kettle-drum and threw it with such force at the leader of the violins that he lost his wig in the effort. Without waiting to replace it, he strode bareheaded to the front of the orchestra, breathing vengeance, but so choked with passion that he could hardly utter a word. In this ridiculous attitude he stood staring and stamping for some moments, amidst the general convulsion of laughter. Nor could he be prevailed upon to resume his seat until the Prince went in person and succeeded in appeasing his wrath.

Prince or plebeian, it was all the same to Handel. If anybody talked during a performance, he not only swore but "called names." For all this, he was a deeply religious man. When writing the Hallelujah Chorus he said: "I did see all heaven open before me and the great God Himself." He knew his Bible so well that for several of his oratorios he was his own librettist. At the coronation of George II., the Bishops chose the words for the anthem and sent them to Handel to set to music. "I have read my Bible very well, and shall choose for myself," was the reply he returned with the Bishops' manuscript.

Many stories have been told of Handel's almost unappeasable appetite, some of them certainly exaggerated. There is a caricature of his time representing him with the head of a hog, seated at the organ, while the instrument is garnished with hams, sausages, and other coarse foods. The most familiar anecdote is that which tells of him going to a tavern and ordering dinner for three. Having sat a long time without any signs of the dinner, he called the landlord. The landlord said he was waiting till the company arrived. "Then bring the dinner *prestissimo*," replied Handel, "for I am the company." There is another story of a social evening at his house in Brook Street, Hanover Square. During supper, Handel frequently called out, "Oh! I have a thought," and retired to another room on pretence of writing it down. At last some suspicious guest had the curiosity to peep through the keyhole into the adjoining apartment. What he discovered was that Handel's "thoughts" were being bestowed on a fresh hamper of Burgundy which had been sent him in a present by one of his admirers!

There is little need to sum up Handel as a composer. Sir Hubert Parry puts it very well when he says that his style has suited the English nation better than any other, owing to its directness and vigour and robustness; and also, no doubt, because the nation has always had a great love for choral music, of which he is one of the greatest masters. Beethoven's judgment on him was perfectly sound. "Handel," said he, "is the unapproachable master of all masters. Go to him and learn to produce great effects with little means." Similarly, Haydn, in reference to Handel's choral work, exclaimed, "He is the master of us all!" No composer has ever understood so well how to extract from a body of voices such grand results by means so simple and yet so skilfully conceived. In oratorio at least Handel is the people's composer, and such he must remain so long as oratorio holds its place with the public.

BACH, OLD FATHER OF FUGUES

> There is only one Bach ! only one Bach !
> FREDERICK THE GREAT.

JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH was Handel's greatest contemporary. Curiously enough, they never met nor even corresponded, though more than once they just missed meeting. On one occasion Bach went to Halle, hearing that Handel was there and expecting to greet him, but Handel had left for England an hour or two before his brother composer arrived. The two, Handel and Bach, are often spoken of as if they were a sort of Siamese twins of music. They were both Germans, and they were born within a month of each other. Both, again, were fine organists, both gave great religious works to the world, and both were stricken blind in their later years. Beyond that, they had not much in common. Handel, as we have seen, enjoyed a prominent place as a popular composer, and died rich after a residence of more than forty years in London. Bach, a quiet, stay-at-home man, who married twice and had a family of twenty sons and daughters, laboured with small resources in the little town of Leipzig for the last twenty-four years of his life, and outside a rather limited public in Germany he was hardly known at all. Nevertheless, of all the works of that period, the ones which have real influence on art at the present time are those of Bach.

Handel's influence was felt almost solely in oratorio and in England alone; whereas Bach had a real and lasting influence on all the great composers who followed him. All looked up to him, and took, as it were, their cue from his seriousness and his calm dignity. Beethoven was enthralled by his stupendous Mass in B minor, the chief monument of his genius. Mozart by chance heard some of his compositions and came away "deeply impressed and wondering." The first time he heard one of Bach's hymns he said, "Thank God! I have learnt something absolutely new." Schumann exclaimed, "Only from *one* might all composers find ever-new creative power—from John Sebastian Bach." Mendelssohn, Brahms, Wagner—all revered Bach as their godfather in music. And that position is in nowise changed to-day. In spite of modern developments, "old Bach" remains the musician for musicians, just as Spenser remains the poet for poets. Still he commands the attention of the musical world, whether in church, in concert-room, or in study. Of him, more than of any of the other great composers, it may be said that he is "not for an age but for all time."

Bach is the best example that we have of the degree to which music may sometimes be inherited. He bore the name of a Thuringian family, in which the pursuit of music was uniquely hereditary and carefully nourished from childhood. In course of time the family held practically all the musical posts in Thuringia. With its numerous branches, and many members in each branch, all dwelling in the same province, they spread in every direction, and it was a queer place where one did not find a Bach as cantor or organist or town musician. The whole family lived on the most affectionate terms with each other. They intermarried freely, and one day in the year was set apart for a grand Bach gathering, after the manner of the nobility. In Erfurt, Eisenach, Arnstadt, Gotha, Mühlhausen, Bachs were established as organists; and still, at the end of the eighteenth century, the town pipers in Erfurt were called "the Bachs," although not one amongst them was a Bach! Not that the musical Bachs had ceased to exist. It was not until as late as 1846 that the great line, the most honourable in the history of music, became extinct, when Wilhelm F. E. Bach died. Even now the name of Bach is quite common in Germany. In 1899 no fewer than thirteen families of Bachs were living in Erfurt alone, and there were others elsewhere.

The genealogy of the Bachs has naturally given some trouble to the biographers, but it is now clearly proved that the root of the great tree was a certain Veit Bach, a miller and baker, who, after being chased from Germany to Hungary and back again on account of his Protestant faith, finally settled near the German frontier. According to our composer, "Veit's greatest pleasure was to play on a guitar which he brought back with him from his travels. This he was in the habit of playing while the mill was in motion, and, notwithstanding the noise of the mill, he kept strictly to time, and this, I think, may be looked upon as the beginning of the musical feeling of his descendants." About the year 1580 there was born to Veit a son, Hans, who inherited so much of the family gift that he threw up the mill and became a musician. Hans married and gave his name to three more Bachs—John, Christopher, and Henry—who also took up the profession of music. Christopher was our composer's grandfather. This Christopher had twin sons, who were so like each other that even their wives could not tell them apart! Nay, they "were exceedingly alike in temperament as well, so that when one suffered from any disorder, the other was almost sure to be afflicted in the same way." One of the twins, Johann Ambrosius, became Court and town musician at Eisenach, and it was at Eisenach that his famous son was born, on the 21st of March 1685, just a month after Handel.

The little Johann did not long enjoy the protection of his parents, for he was left an orphan when only ten years old. But already he had received indelible musical impressions from hearing his father play on the violin, an instrument which he himself learnt very early. When the father died, Sebastian was taken under the care of his elder brother, John Christopher, who was organist at a small village near Eisenach. The brother, a hard and stern specimen, gave the boy lessons in music until he began to realise that the boy would soon outstrip himself, and then, with jealousy most contemptible in a brother, began to put all the obstacles in his way that he could think of. There was one particular volume of music in the brother's collection that Sebastian eagerly desired to get hold of for the purpose of study. But the book was kept under lock and key, and it was a long time before he could lay his hands on it. Then, at night, whenever there was sufficient moonlight for the purpose, he managed by degrees to copy out its contents. The task took him six months, and when the monster of a brother discovered what he had been up to he at once robbed the boy of his precious copy. It was no doubt to this moonlight labour that Bach partly owed the blindness which came upon him in later life.

The main thing to be noted from the incident is, however, the zeal with which young Sebastian pursued his studies. That zeal may be said to have continued with him to the end. Some years later, when the ogre of a brother was dead, and when he had begun to make a little money as a choir boy (for he had a lovely soprano voice), he saved every trifle in order to get to Hamburg to hear the great Reinken, then the leading organist in the country. Sometimes he travelled on foot. He certainly did so when, later, he was at Lüneberg, which is about thirty miles from Hamburg. In his old age he was fond of telling a curious story connected with one of these trips. He was half-way home after a feast of Reinken playing, and nearly all his money was spent. He arrived at a country inn where the savoury odour of cooking made him hungrier than he already was. He sat down by the road, musing on his hard fate. Suddenly a window was opened and two herring-heads were flung at him. He picked them up and found a Danish ducat in each of them. Some kindly disposed stranger had observed him, and guessing the cause of his despondency, played this trick on him. It enabled him to get a good dinner, and he resumed his way rejoicing. Bach went, in 1720, a last time to hear Reinken, who was still at his post, though then ninety-seven. The young man played to the veteran for two hours, and Reinken was so overcome that he shed tears of joy while he tenderly embraced Bach. "I did think," he said, "that this art would die with me, but I see that you will keep it alive." Here he referred especially to the young player's gifts of extemporisation.

Bach was eighteen years old when he received his first musical appointment. It was as a violinist in the band of the Duke of Weimar. But Bach had never taken very kindly to the violin. The organ was his favourite instrument, first and last, and so we are not surprised to find him installed a year later as organist at Arnstadt. Here he put in a quiet life of steady work for two years, writing some of his early church cantatas for his choir, and toiling at the organ like a galley slave. He made long excursions to hear famous organists, and on one notable occasion he obtained leave of absence for a month that he might go to Lübeck and listen to Buxtehude, the greatest organist in that part of the country. Lübeck was fifty miles from Arnstadt, but Bach cheerfully performed the journey on foot. His month of leave passed all too quickly, and he found himself so infatuated by Buxtehude's playing that he resolved to extend his holiday at the risk of losing his place.

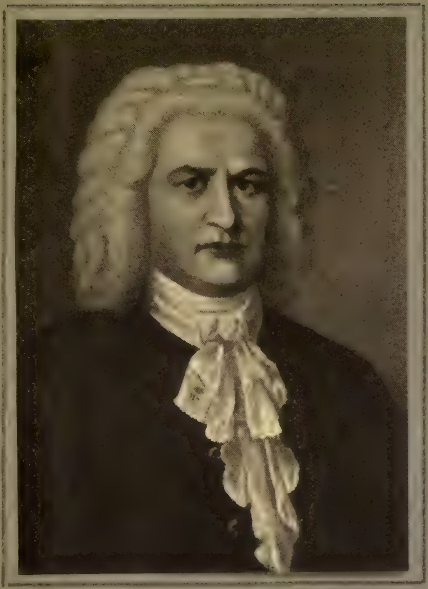
It was not, in fact, until he had been four months away that he took the road for Arnstadt. Naturally on his return he was severely reprimanded for his behaviour. It seems that the church authorities had not been entirely satisfied with his performance of the duties before he left, and this too was now made a matter of complaint. A formal examination was held, and the local magnates reported : "We charge him with having hitherto been in the habit of making surprising variations in the chorales, and intermixing divers strange sounds, so that thereby the congregation were confounded." Bach, one fears, lost his temper with these would-be dictators, for we find that his answers, eight months delayed, though short, were not submissive.

By and by there arose a fresh ground for complaint against the young organist. In one of the reports it is thus written : "We further remonstrate with him on his having allowed the stranger maiden to show herself and to make music in the choir." Which means simply that Bach, who was described by Mattheson as "a constant admirer of the fair sex," had given his sweetheart a place among his singers. This was very wrong of him. In the older church cantatas women did not sing; so that Bach committed almost as great an indiscretion as the organists of Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral would commit if they allowed a woman's voice to be heard in their choirs.

Bach's answer to the Arnstadt authorities was that he had "mentioned the matter to the parson." Perhaps when he spoke to the parson he confessed his love and his betrothal. At any rate, he was married a year later to this "stranger maiden," who bore his own name, and was indeed a cousin from a neighbouring town. Cousins, they tell us, should not marry. But it is worth remarking that the most distinguished of Bach's sons were all the children of his first marriage. It was the "stranger maiden" who was the mother of Wilhelm Friedemann, the father's favourite, and of Philipp Emanuel, whom the musical world long preferred to Sebastian himself. There is an amusing entry of the composer's marriage in the parish register. "On October 17, 1707," it reads, "the respectable Herr Johann Sebastian Bach, a bachelor, the surviving lawful son of the late most respectable Herr Ambrosius Bach, the famous town organist and musician of Eisenach, was married to the virtuous maiden, Maria Barbara Bach, the youngest surviving unmarried daughter of the late very respectable and famous artist, Johann Michael Bach, organist at Gehren," and so on. Only in Germany have the registrars time to cultivate such flowers of rhetoric. Yet how we like to read it all of Sebastian, after these two hundred years have elapsed!

It was not at Arnstadt but at Mühlhausen that Bach was married. Perhaps he found Arnstadt uncomfortable after the above-recorded incidents. Even now, Arnstadt does not seem to be sufficiently appreciative of her greatest organist. Quite recently the chief music-seller there told a well-known English musician that Bach's music is out of date. "No one has now any interest in such old-fashioned stuff," he said. Bach seems to have had no trouble at Mühlhausen, but he stayed there only long enough to set up house. His salary was about £7 a year, with certain *et ceteras*, including "three pounds of fish a year." A paltry inheritance of £4 presently came to him. But alas! "modest as is my way of life," he wrote, "with the payment of house rent and other indispensable articles of consumption, I can with difficulty live." Thus, to better himself, he was soon on the move again—this time to Weimar, as organist, of course.

We read now of his reputation as an executant, as a composer, and as an extemporiser spreading all over Germany. There was no need for him making tiresome journeys to hear great organists any more, for he was now among the greatest himself, and lesser men were soon coming to hear *him*. By and by he removed to Cöthen as kapellmeister and organist to the Prince of Anhalt. Here was produced what is perhaps the most generally known of all his works, the collection bearing the title of the *Forty-eight Preludes and Fugues*. Bach called it *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, well-tempered being a synonym for well or correctly tuned. The



BACH

title requires some explanation. In olden times, when fewer keys were used in composition than now, it was considered enough if a key-board instrument had one or two keys in tune. Keys with several flats and sharps were never in strict tune. In this way, owing to a curious scientific fact, the few keys could be "better in tune and sound better in some ways than if all the keys were equally considered." Gradually, however, composers desired to use more keys, and it came to be a question whether it were better to endure some keys which were out of tune for the sake of the few which were in perfect tune, or to make all the keys alike.

Bach foresaw clearly that the time must come when composers would write in every possible key, and so he made himself a beginning in this *Well-Tempered Clavier*. The famous work has not only been "the constant source of happiness and content and comfort to most of the musicians of any standing in the world since the beginning of last century, but it has all the elements of the most lasting value imaginable. In it men find almost all the shades of feeling they can desire, except such as are tainted with coarseness or levity. The very depths of pathos and sadness are sounded in some numbers, in others there is joy and lightness, in others humour and merriment, in others the sublimest dignity, and in others that serenity of beauty which seems to lift man above himself, and to make him free for the time from the shadows and darker places of his nature, and all pieces alike are cast in a form of most perfect art, and in that scale which can be realised completely at home with no more elaborate resources than one little keyed instrument." Every virtuoso of the piano knows the value of the matchless "Forty-eight." When Chopin was to give a recital, he never practised the pieces he was to play, but shut himself up for a fortnight and played Bach. "Let the *Well-Tempered Clavier* be thy daily bread," said Schumann; and better advice could not be given. Whether for technical practice, intellectual enjoyment, or spiritual nourishment, the "Forty-eight" are of priceless worth. They are perfect little cameos of art, and if Bach had written nothing else, he would still have endeared himself to us.

But there is more to be said in this connection. We must never forget Bach's reforms in the matter of key-board fingering. Before his day players hardly used the thumb and fourth finger at all. Scales used to be played by turning the second and third fingers over one another, and only now and again would the fourth finger be used, to get over peculiar difficulties. Bach changed all this, and so we may, in a sense, regard him as the father of modern piano playing. Of his own style of fingering an early biographer says: "He played with so easy and small a motion of the fingers that it was hardly perceptible. Only the first joints of his fingers were in motion; his hand retained, even in the most difficult passages, its rounded form; his fingers rose very little from the keys, hardly more than in a shake, and when one was employed, the others remained still in their positions."

At Cöthen one of Bach's most serious domestic calamities befell him. He had been from home, and when he returned to get, as he expected, the glad greetings of his wife, he found that she was already dead and buried. Bach was a man of deep emotions and few words, and he suffered keenly from this bereavement. But he was essentially a family man, and it was not long before he married again, this time a lady of musical taste and accomplishment, who helped him appreciably in his professional work. She sang and played well, and she had, besides, a beautiful hand for copying music. Bach taught her the harpsichord, and a good deal of his music was expressly written for her The new wife, who bore her husband thirteen children, made the Bach home a little musical paradise. Seven years after the marriage the composer wrote of his family: "They are one and all born musicians, and I assure you that I can already form a concert, both vocal and instrumental, of my own family, particularly as my wife sings a clear soprano, and my eldest daughter joins in bravely." A pretty picture that is, to think of!

In course of time Bach got tired of Cöthen, and the office of cantor to the school of St. Thomas in Leipzig falling in his way, he accepted it, and settled down to what was his last appointment. This was in 1723. He now turned his attention chiefly to church music, and produced those magnificent settings of the Passion which have given him a place as a religious composer beside Handel himself. To the end his life went on in the same placid and uneventful way in which his earlier years had been spent. True, his post at St. Thomas did not prove a bed of roses. It is recorded in a Leipzig paper of 1749 that the officials had then actually chosen a successor, "when Kapellmeister and Cantor Herr Sebastian Bach should die." It was also contrived to perform an elegy over Bach ere he vacated the post, in the shape of a cantata entitled "The rich man died and was buried." There were other annoyances. But Bach took them all calmly and philosophically. He loved his own fireside and his art, his friends and his family better than anything else in the world, and these were his consolation amid all the troubles and vexations of his career.

He seldom went from home, and the limits of his journeyings hardly exceeded a small portion of his native country at any time. One of his excursions deserves special mention. Bach lived in the time of Frederick the Great. Now Frederick was musical (he played the flute), and he had engaged Bach's son, Philipp Emanuel, as accompanist. He had heard much of Bach's musical powers, and he took a notion to have a visit from the great organist. So Bach, now an old man over sixty, set out on the journey. The King was at supper when his arrival was announced. Springing from the table, Frederick broke up the meal with the words: "Gentlemen, Bach is here!" and took him, weary as he was with travel, through the palace. Bach played upon the new Silbermann pianos, of which Frederick was very proud, and improvised upon a bit of melody given him by Frederick himself. "There's only one

Bach! only one Bach!" exclaimed Frederick, in a transport of delight. And then Bach frankly told Frederick that he preferred the organ to his pianos—that the piano seemed fitted only for light rondos or variations! It is said that the King sent Bach a substantial sum of money after this visit, which was embezzled before it reached the composer.

This journey seems to have laid the foundation of Bach's last illness. He was feeble before he started, and his return brought grave anxiety to his household. He had to undergo a dangerous operation on his eyes, too. For several years before, his sight had been affected, and now, like Handel, he found that the operation led only to total blindness. It was a short struggle at the last. Bach's sight most unexpectedly returned, but he became frenzied with such joy at this that an apoplectic seizure followed, and he suddenly expired on the evening of July 28, 1750. He was laid to rest, with sincere and general mourning, near the church of St. John, in Leipzig. A strange fate has attended the remains of certain of the great musicians. Bach did not escape. No record marked the place where he was buried, though it was known that he had been buried in an oak coffin and in a single grave. "One evening," says Schumann, "I went to the Leipzig churchyard to find the grave of a great man. Many hours I searched around and about. I found no J. S. Bach, and when I asked the sexton about it, he shook his head over the man's obscurity and remarked 'there were many Bachs.'" In 1894, when the old church was being demolished for rebuilding, somebody suggested that an effort should be made to recover Bach's remains. The skeleton of an elderly man was found, which, by a process of reasoning, was supposed to be Bach's. It was accordingly taken to an anatomical museum, "cleaned up," and clothed with a semblance of flesh to show how Bach looked in life. One can only hope that it wasn't Bach's skeleton after all.

Bach left no will, and his children, some of whom suffered dire straits in later years, seized his MSS. What little money remained from his miserable salary of £13 a year they divided with the widow, the gentle, talented Anna Magdalena. What were all her brave sons doing that, ten years later, when she died, it should be as an inmate of the poorhouse? They all went away to other towns, some of them to considerable success. Mother and three daughters were left to shift for themselves, which meant the selling of Bach's musical remains and an appeal to charity. It was a disgrace to Leipzig that this should come to pass, though it must be remembered that Germany did not then recognise the greatness of Bach as we do now. When Anna Magdalena died in 1760, her only mourners were a daughter and some of the public-school children, who, according to custom, had to follow the very poor to the grave. In 1801 Bach's daughter, Regina, was still living, a "good old woman," who would have starved but for a public subscription, to which Beethoven contributed.

Something of Bach's character as a man will have been gathered from what has preceded. As a rule he was genial and kindly, but his temper would occasionally show itself. Thus at a rehearsal, when the organist had made a very bad blunder, he flew into a towering rage, tore his wig from his head, and threw it at the offender, shouting that "he had better have been a cobbler." He was very modest about his own abilities as a player. When some one applauded his wonderful dexterity he said: "There is nothing wonderful about it; you have only to hit the right notes at the right time and the instrument plays of itself." He would say to his pupils when they complained of difficulties: "You have five as good fingers on each hand as I have." As an organist he was himself without rival in his own time. It was written of him that "with his two feet he could perform on the pedals passages which would be enough to provoke many a skilled clavier player with ten fingers." There is a story, legendary, no doubt, that he would go into churches disguised as a poor country schoolmaster, and, asking the organist to let him play, would improvise in such a wonderful manner that the listeners exclaimed: "This must be either Bach or the devil." And yet this great master of the organ at no time possessed an instrument really worthy of his powers.

Bach can never be what is called a "popular" composer. The "popular" musical mind does not understand him or appreciate him. The popular musical mind is here in the same case as the lady who, at the close of a concert at which John L. Hatton, the composer of the famous song "To Anthea," had played two of Bach's finest fugues, described Hatton as "the man who came in between the parts to tune the piano." Sir Walter Parratt, master of the King's Band, has an ideal composer in Bach, but does not get everybody to agree with him. He once asked a young lady why she had not attended a certain performance of Bach's music. In a moment of stupendous honesty she replied: "Because I did not care about it." Sir Walter gazed in sorrowful silence, and then quietly said: "You're a little donkey." Mendelssohn had better luck with a pretty girl to whom he gave lessons at Düsseldorf. He converted his young pupil from Herz to Bach, and the grateful father, who loved Bach himself, rewarded Mendelssohn with a parcel of cloth. "I could scarcely believe it at first, but the parcel really contained enough of the finest black cloth to make an entire suit. This savours of the Middle Ages," wrote Mendelssohn. These anecdotes are significant.

But Bach has his following even among the amateurs, and the following will be greater as time goes on. Then will be fully understood the meaning of that remark of Schumann, that Bach was a man to whom music owes almost as great a debt as religion owes to its founder. "To me," said Goethe, "it is with Bach as if the eternal harmonies discoursed with one another." So it has been, and so it will be, to multitudes besides.

PAPA AND MAMMA HAYDN

Sound—immortal Music sound!
Bid the golden Words go round!
Every heart and tongue proclaim
Haydn's power, and Haydn's fame!
BARRY CORNWALL.

So much for the first pair of great composers. They can be followed chronologically and conveniently by another pair—Haydn and Mozart. Though Bach and Handel never met, Haydn and Mozart often did. They had a sincere regard for each other too. It was Mozart who, recognising his brother composer as his foster-father in music, called him by the fond title of "Papa Haydn," which sticks to him yet. We also, though for other reasons, may well call him "Papa." He was the father of most of the instrumental forms of music which are regarded as fixed forms to-day—the symphony, the sonata, the string quartet, and the like. That is to say, he wrote works in these departments which every composer feels to be the right sort of models to follow; just as in writing a novel one might follow the model of Scott, or Dickens, or Thackeray. Haydn came into the world exactly at the right time. Music, before he began to write, had descended to the dead level of the commonplace, for the best days of Bach and Handel were over, and the other living composers were but pigmies by comparison. It was Haydn's province to give music a fresh direction, and to raise up from the old foundation a new style at once pleasing and ennobling.

Francis Joseph Haydn began his career, to use his own phrase, as "a poor devil," lived to enjoy a comfortable competency, and died heavy alike with years and honours. He was born at Rohrau, a village on the confines of Austria and Hungary, on the 31st of March 1732. The home was a humble thatched structure of one story, with a barn attached. Though rebuilt (for it had been swept away by a flood), it still stands, much the same as it did when Haydn, then a celebrity, returned to Rohrau in 1795, and knelt down on its threshold and kissed the ground. Beethoven was shown a picture of it when lying on his deathbed. "Strange," he said, "that so great a man should have had so lowly an origin." Haydn was proud of his lowly origin because he had, as he put it, "made something out of nothing." His people were certainly poor enough. The father was a wheelwright, and the mother had been a nobleman's cook. But both, luckily, were musical. The father was village organist: "a great lover of music," his famous son said, "and played the harp without knowing a note of music."

By and by the little Joseph, to give the composer the Christian name he usually bore, began, in his own childish fashion, to assist in the domestic concerts by pretending to play the fiddle with two pieces of stick. These "wooden" performances were not thrown away. One day a neighbouring schoolmaster named Frankh happened to look in, and seeing the boy sawing bravely with his sham fiddle, offered to take him into his house and educate him. The wheelwright was delighted, and the mother gave her reluctant consent.

Frankh did fairly well by the boy, teaching him to read and write and to play on a real violin and several other instruments besides. Storiesare toldof his getting flogged when he should have got fed. But he was a cheerful fellow, and in play hours he revenged himself by transferring the master's blows to a big drum on which he practised a lot. There is a funny story told in illustration of his expertness with this same instrument. A drummer was wanted for a procession, and Frankh fixed on Haydn. Haydn did not mind, but he was so small that the drum had to be carried before him on the back of another boy, who happened to be a hunchback. The effect must have been comical enough. Haydn retained his early skill on the drum. When rehearsing a concert during his second visit to London, the regular drummer was found to be absent. "Can any one here play the drum?" Haydn asked. "I can," promptly replied young George (afterwards Sir George) Smart, who was sitting among the violinists. But Smart somehow failed to satisfy the conductor, who, in fact, took the drumsticks from him, and after a practical illustration remarked, "That is how we use the drumsticks in Germany." "Oh, very well," replied the unabashed Smart, "if you like it better that way we can also do it so in London."

When Haydn was nearly nine he had a second piece of luck. The choirmaster of St. Stephen's, Vienna, came to see schoolmaster Frankh. The musical prodigy was of course produced. He sang a song, and when it was finished the pleased visitor cried "Bravo!" as he flung a handful of cherries into Haydn's cap. "But, my little man," he asked, "how is it you cannot do the shake?" for there was a trill in the song which Haydn had ignored. "How can you expect me to shake when Herr Frankh himself cannot shake?" was the bold reply. The result of this interview was Haydn's being carried away to Vienna as a chorister in St. Stephen's, where he was to spend the remaining years of such formal study as he ever passed through.

He tells us that he "learnt singing, the clavier, and the violin from good masters," besides writing and ciphering, and a little Latin and theology. His instinct for composition now began to assert itself, and he covered every scrap of music paper he could lay hands on. He would write for twelve voices as readily as for two, innocently believing that "it must be all right if the paper be nice and full." His masters seem really to have paid little attention to him, but he had the art of picking up things quickly, and by dint of hard work he managed to get on. "When my comrades were playing," he says, "I used to take my little clavier under my arm, and go out where I would be undisturbed so as to practise by myself."

It must not, however, be supposed that he was unlike other boys in the matter of fun and mischief. Thus we find him scrambling about the scaffolding when some additions were being made to the Imperial Chapel. The Empress had caught the St. Stephen's choristers at this game more than once, but the boys paid no heed to her threats and prohibitions. One day when Haydn was balancing himself aloft, far above his schoolfellows, the Empress saw him from her windows and sent a Court official to "give that fair-haired blockhead a good thrashing." Many years afterwards, when he was bandmaster to Prince Esterhazy, the fair-haired blockhead had an opportunity of thanking the Empress for this mark of royal favour.

Haydn got on very well at St. Stephen's until his voice began to break. So far the Empress had been pleased with his singing, but now she declared that "young Haydn sings like a crow." As if he could help his voice breaking! The opinion of the Empress was law to the choirmaster; so he began to look for an opportunity of getting rid of the boy. It came soon enough, and unfortunately it was Haydn himself who provided it. Always fond of practical joking, he one day tried a pair of new scissors on the pig-tail of a fellow chorister. The pig-tail was clean removed, and the joker was condemned to be caned. In vain Haydn begged to be let off, declaring he would rather leave than submit to the indignity. The choirmaster said he would have to leave in any case, but he must first be caned. So it was: at the age of sixteen Haydn was thrown out on the world, with "three wretched shirts and a worn-out coat," an empty purse, a keen appetite, and practically no friends.

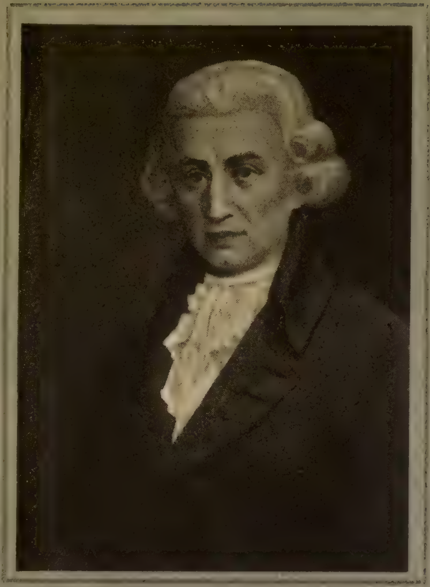
He got himself housed in a miserable garret with an acquaintance named Spangler, and looked about for any and every means of earning a living. "For eight long years," he says, "I was forced to knock about wretchedly, giving lessons to the young." He did more than that. He sang in choirs, played at balls and weddings and baptisms, made arrangements of musical works for anybody who would employ him, and even took part in street serenades by playing the violin. Presently he gathered about him a few pupils, who provided him with at least the bare necessaries of life. Every spare moment he devoted to the study of composition. To his dingy attic he brought, one by one, as he could afford them, all the known theoretical works, and thoroughly mastered them without help. Ultimately he did get some assistance when he became accompanist to Niccolo Porpora, a famous singing-master of the time, whom Handel, who had some rivalry with him, used to call "Old Borbora." It is odd to read of Haydn acting as a lackey to Porpora: blacking his boots and trimming his wig and brushing his coat and running his errands and—playing his accompaniments. But Haydn apparently thought nothing of it. He wanted to fit himself for his profession, and he had to get his instruction as he went along, at whatever cost to his dignity.

Luckily his pecuniary affairs soon improved greatly.

He raised his terms for pupils, and was fortunate enough to be appointed music director to the Bohemian Count Morzin, who kept an orchestra at his country-house. His salary from the Count amounted to about £20, with board and lodgings. It made in reality his only fixed and assured income. But he must have a wife, whatever his income! Up to this time he had not seemed to be "built for love." It is told of him that he got wildly agitated when he was accompanying a young Countess whose neckerchief became disarranged for a moment. But Haydn had several love affairs. For the present his fate was sealed. He had been giving lessons to the youngest daughter of a wig-maker named Keller. As often happens in similar circumstances (Mozart was a victim), he fell in love with his pupil, but for some unexplained reason she decided to wear, not a bride's but a nun's veil. "Never mind," said the wig-maker to Haydn, "you shall have my other daughter." And Haydn did have the other daughter, though she was three years his senior.

Her name was Anna Maria, and he married her, in November 1760, not for better but for worse. Frau Haydn, as some one has described her, was "a regular Xantippe; heartless, unsociable, quarrelsome, extravagant, and bigoted." Carpani says she was "not pretty nor yet ugly." Her manners, he adds, "were immaculate, but she had a wooden head, and when she had fixed on a caprice there was no way to change it." She had an excess of religious piety which took forms that greatly disturbed her husband in his work. For she had the house always full of priests, and gave them grand dinners and suppers and luncheons, to which Haydn's thrifty soul objected. Haydn said she did not care a straw whether he were an artist or a shoemaker. She used his music manuscripts as curling-papers and underlays for the pastry; and once when he was away from home she wrote to him that if he should die there was not enough money in the house to bury him. She even told him when he was in London that she had seen a charming house which would make her "such a nice widow's residence," and asked him to send the cash to buy it. Frau Haydn saw out her seventy years without getting a taste of the widowhood she longed for. Haydn survived her nine years. He bought the house she had coveted, "and now," he wrote in 1806, "it is I who am living in it—as a widower." That house (it stands in a suburb of Vienna) has been preserved by Haydn's admirers almost as it was, and has been turned into a kind of museum containing portraits and mementos of the master, the original manuscript of the *Creation*, and other interesting relics. What would Frau Haydn have thought if she could have foreseen all this?

For a long time Haydn tried making the best of it with her; but there came a day when he realised that to live entirely apart was the only solution of the problem. He made his wife a sufficient allowance, and he had the approval of his own conscience, which is all a man need think about. His was a childless union, and that no doubt embittered the situation. After the



HAYDN

separation he fell in love with a married woman, an Italian singer named Polzelli, aged nineteen. She was not happy with her husband, and he had found his wife impossible; and they confided their sorrows to each other, and solaced themselves with flirtation. Haydn wrote to Polzelli that "if only four eyes were closed" they would get married. But the four eyes were long in closing, and by that time Haydn was disillusioned and too old to marry.

The composer's engagement with Count Morzin soon came to an end, but he was almost immediately secured as musical director to the Esterhazy family, in whose service he remained for thirty years. Great families kept a band of their own in those days, and the Esterhazys were able by their wealth and vast possessions to maintain a sort of regal magnificence. The Esterhazy whom Haydn was engaged to serve was a man of extravagant tastes, who went about in a diamond-embroidered coat. He had an opera-house and a concert-room attached to his palace, and he gathered about him a large company of first-class performers, over whom Haydn was now set in command. To some natures the post would have proved tedious and irksome. But Haydn was a man of philosophic contentment, inclined to look rather at the advantages than the disadvantages of his situation. "As conductor of the orchestra," he says, "I could make experiments and observe effects, and was thus in a position to improve, alter, add, or omit as I pleased. It is true that I was cut off from the world, but I was safe from intrusion, and thus was I forced to become original."

At any rate, there was always plenty for the bandmaster to do. Royalties, nobles, and aristocrats were constantly at Esterhaz, and the band was daily in request. The Prince was very proud of his musical establishment, and would have it regarded as the best of its kind in Europe. This meant for Haydn untiring rehearsal and drilling, besides arranging works and writing original compositions. During his tenure of office he composed a large number of symphonies, operas, masses, concertos, trios, quartets, and other vocal and instrumental works. Gradually his music got to be known far and wide, and publishers were ready to bring out his compositions almost as fast as he could put them on paper. Invitations came to him to visit Paris and London, but for a long time he would not be drawn from his seclusion.

At last, in 1790, a violinist named Salomon made him promise to visit London. "My name is Salomon," he bluntly announced, as he was shown into Haydn's room one morning. "I have come from London to fetch you. We will settle terms to-morrow." Three years before this, a London music publisher named Bland had gone over to Vienna to try and coax him. When he called, Bland found him shaving, and complaining loudly of the bluntness of his razor. "I would give my best quartet for a good razor," he exclaimed impatiently. Bland took the hint and hurried off to fetch a better tool. Haydn was as good as his word.

He presented Bland with his latest quartet, which is still commonly known as the Razor Quartet.

Well, Salomon succeeded where Bland had failed: Haydn agreed to go to London. The arrangement was that he should have £300 for six symphonies and £200 for their copyright; £200 for twenty new compositions to be produced by himself at the same number of concerts; and £200 from a benefit concert. This was tempting, yet Haydn was not quite happy about going. A long journey was not to be lightly undertaken in those pre-railway days, and Haydn was nearly threescore. Moreover, he felt parting with his friends, especially with Mozart, "a man very dear to me," as he said. It was a beautiful thing, this regard of the two greatest composers of their time for each other. Haydn called Mozart "the most comprehensive, original, extraordinary musical genius ever known in this or any age or nation." Once he wrote: "I only wish I could impress upon every friend of mine, and on great men in particular, the same deep musical sympathy and profound appreciation which I myself feel for Mozart's inimitable music; then nations would vie with each other to possess such a jewel within their frontiers. . . . Forgive my excitement! I love the man so dearly." And Mozart loved *him*. A new string quartet of Haydn's was being rehearsed, when Kozeluch, a popular composer who was jealous of Haydn, leaned forward to Mozart at a certain bold passage and whispered: "I would not have done that." "Nor I," promptly rejoined Mozart; "and do you know why?

Because neither you nor I would have had such an idea." And now, when Mozart thought of parting with Haydn, he was sadly concerned. "Oh Papa," he said, "you have had no education for the wide, wide world, and you speak too few languages." When it came to the actual farewell, the tears sprang to his eyes, and he said affectingly: "This is good-bye; we shall never meet again." The words proved true. A year later Mozart was lying in a pauper's grave. Haydn was inconsolable at the loss. When he started for home at the end of his London visit, his saddest reflection was that there would be no Mozart to meet him. His shrewish wife had tried to poison his mind against his friend by writing that Mozart had been disparaging his genius. "I cannot believe it," he cried; "if it is true, I will forgive him." As late as 1807, he burst into tears when Mozart's name was mentioned, and then, recovering himself, remarked: "Pardon me! I must ever weep at the name of my Mozart."

Haydn did not like London so well as Handel and Mendelssohn did. His landlord charged him too much. Everything was "terribly dear." The fogs gave him rheumatism and made him wrap up in flannel from head to foot. The street noises worried him; and so on. But London made up for all this by its flattering reception of the visitor. He received so many invitations that he wrote home: "I could dine out every day." Poets praised him in doubtful verse; musical societies of all kinds made him their guest. He was introduced to no end of notabilities. One was

Herschel, the great astronomer, who had been a poor musician before a lucky marriage put him in the way of fame. "His landlady was a widow," Haydn tells. "She fell in love with him, married him, and gave him a dowry of £100,000." Haydn was surprised at the idea of a man sitting out of doors to study the stars "in the most intense cold for five or six hours at a time." More interesting to him was Mrs. Billington. There is no more familiar anecdote than that which connects Haydn with Sir Joshua Reynolds's portrait of this distinguished vocalist. Haydn one day found Mrs. Billington sitting to Reynolds, who was painting her as St. Cecilia listening to the angels. "It is like," said Haydn, "but there is a strange mistake. You have painted her listening to the angels, whereas you ought to have represented the angels as listening to her." Could compliment be more charming? At St. Paul's Cathedral the visitor heard 4000 Charity Children sing, and was "more touched by this innocent and reverent music than by any I ever heard in my life." He went to Oxford to be made a Doctor of music, and grumbled at having to walk about for three days in his gorgeous robe of cherry and cream coloured silk. These excitements contrasted strangely with the quiet drowsy life of Esterhaz; and although Haydn evidently felt flattered, he often expressed a wish to escape from so much attention in order to get peace for work.

His concerts were a great success, though he was not altogether pleased with his audiences. Fresh from the dinner-table, they sometimes fell asleep during the slow movements of his symphonies, and naturally he did not like it. He had a keen sense of humour, and he thought of a little joke, which resulted in the well-known *Surprise* symphony. The slow movement of this symphony opens and proceeds in the most subdued manner, and just at the moment when the audience may be imagined to have comfortably settled for their nap, a sudden crashing *fortissimo* chord is introduced. "There all the women will scream," chuckled Haydn. It certainly gave them a "surprise!" If Haydn's audiences occasionally fell asleep, they at least paid their money; and, on the whole, he was perfectly satisfied. After his benefit concert, on May 16, 1791, he made the following graceful acknowledgment in the *Morning Chronicle*: "Mr. Haydn, extremely flattered with his reception in a country which he had long been ambitious of visiting, and penetrated with the patronage with which he has been honoured by its animated and generous inhabitants, should think himself guilty of the greatest ingratitude if he did not take the earliest opportunity of making his most grateful acknowledgments to the English Public in general, as well as to his particular friends, for the zeal which they have manifested at his concert, which has been supported by such distinguished marks of favour and approbation as will be remembered by him with infinite delight as long as he lives."

Thus ended the composer's first visit to London. He came again in 1794, when a series of pre-arranged concerts brought him something like £2000, which made him comfortable for the rest of his days. During this visit the Prince of Wales, afterwards George IV., "commanded" his attendance at Carlton House no fewer than twenty-six times. At one concert George III. and Queen Caroline attended, and Haydn was presented to the King. "You have written a great deal, Dr. Haydn," said George. "Yes, sire, more than is good for me," was the reply. "Certainly not!" rejoined his Majesty. He was then presented to the Queen, and asked to sing some German songs. "My voice," he said, pointing to the tip of his little finger, "is now no bigger than that"; but he sat down to the piano and sang one of his own songs. He was repeatedly invited by the Queen to Buckingham Palace, and she tried to persuade him to settle in England. "You shall have a house at Windsor during the summer months," she said; and then, looking towards the King, she added: "We can sometimes make music *tête-à-tête*." "Oh, I am not jealous of Haydn," interposed the King; "he is a good, honourable German." These pleasantries were all very well, but Haydn was not inclined to give his professional services even to royalty for nothing. He sent in a bill for a hundred guineas for his appearances at Carlton House and Buckingham Palace, and Parliament thought it expedient to pay the bill and say nothing. Among the other favours bestowed upon him during this visit, mention should be made of the present of a fine talking parrot, which was sold for £140 after his death.

When he went back to Vienna this time, in 1795, it was practically to retire from professional and public life. He had made money, and he could rest on his laurels. Yet it was after this, when he was sixty-six years old, that he composed the tuneful and brilliant oratorio of the *Creation*, a work which, perhaps, more than any other, has kept his name before the musical masses. It seems to have been directly prompted by the hearing of Handel's oratorios in London. He had attended the Handel Commemoration in Westminster Abbey in 1791, and was much impressed with the grandeur of the performances. When the Hallelujah Chorus was sung he wept like a child. "Handel is the master of us all," he said. "Never was I so pious," he afterwards wrote, "as when I was composing the *Creation*. I knelt down every day and prayed God to strengthen me for my work." The new oratorio made an extraordinary effect when first performed in 1798. The whole audience was deeply moved, and Haydn confessed that he could not describe his own sensations. "One moment," he said, "I was as cold as ice, the next I seemed on fire. More than once I was afraid I should have a stroke." It is recorded that Beethoven, alluding to the oratorio, once remarked to Haydn: "Oh! dear master, it is far from being a *creation*." But the story is very likely an invention.

The success of the *Creation* led Haydn to try another work somewhat on the same lines, and the result was the *Seasons*, a setting of Thomson's poem, which has been performed by our choral societies times without number. It shows no trace of the "failing power" of which Haydn had now begun to complain. But the strain of its composition proved too much for him. Indeed he always said himself that the *Seasons* gave him the finishing stroke. His last years were a constant struggle with the infirmities of age; and when his presence was specially desired at a performance of the *Creation* in 1808, he had to be carried in an armchair to his place in the concert hall. At the words "And there was light" he was completely overcome, and pointing upwards exclaimed, "It came from thence." He became more and more agitated as the performance went on, and at last had to be carried out. People of the highest rank crowded around to take leave of him, and Beethoven fervently stooped and kissed his forehead, a pretty act of homage, in view of certain circumstances of which we shall learn later.

In the following year Vienna was occupied by the French, thanks to Napoleon's rampage, and one day while the city was being bombarded a round-shot fell into Haydn's garden. At the same time Beethoven was buried away in a cellar, his ears stuffed with cotton-wool, for he feared that the booming of the cannon might make his deafness worse. The French domination was a grief to the patriot Haydn, but he had no personal fear. Art is independent of nationality. Haydn's music was well known and appreciated in France, and the conquerors paid every possible respect to the dying composer. The pleasing story of the French officer visiting him and singing "In native worth" at his bedside is familiar. On the 26th of

May he called his household around him for the last time, and having been carried to the piano, played his own Austrian Hymn three times over in the midst of the weeping listeners. Five days afterwards, on the 31st of May 1809, Francis Joseph Haydn passed to his rest. Not long before, he had said regretfully: "I have only just learnt how to use the wind instruments, and now that I do understand them, I must leave the world."

They buried him in a churchyard not far from his house, and the grave remained unmarked for five years, when one of Haydn's pupils raised a handsome stone over it. Then, in 1820, Prince Esterhazy ordered the exhumation of the remains for re-interment near the scene of Haydn's long labours at Esterhaz. When the coffin was opened, the startling discovery was made that the skull was missing. Inquiries were instituted, and it was proved that the desecration had taken place two days after the funeral. A wretched "student of phrenology" named Peter had conceived the idea of making a collection of skulls for study. He bribed the sexton and got Haydn's skull. When he was done with it he passed it to another person, who buried it in his back-garden. Then, when he was dying, he ordered it to be restored to Peter, who in turn bequeathed it to a Dr. Haller, from whose keeping it subsequently found its way to the Anatomical Museum at Vienna, where it still is, and where in fact it formed the subject of a lecture in the spring of 1909. Its proper place is, of course, in Haydn's grave.

There have been too many desecrations of this kind.

We have already heard about the alleged Bach skeleton. When Beethoven's grave was opened in 1863, a medical man was actually allowed to cut away the ear passages of the corpse to investigate the cause of the composer's deafness, while some ghoulish person bolted with two of the teeth. Donizetti's skull was stolen before the funeral, and was afterwards sold to a pork-butcher, who used it as a money-bowl! Fortunately in these later days we are more reverential in regard to memorials of the great dead.

Haydn's figure does not seem to have been prepossessing. His complexion was so dark that one called him a Moor and another a nigger. He was unusually pitted with smallpox, a universal disfigurement in those pre-vaccination times. His legs were short, and he had a long beaked nose, with nostrils of different shape. But who does not know Papa Haydn by his portraits? From these we can almost read his character. That face is, as Mr. Haweis says, notable quite as much for what it does not as for what it does express. No soaring ambition, no avarice, no impatience, very little excitability, no malice. On the other hand, it indicates a flow of even health, an exceeding good-humour, combined with a vivacity which seems to say: "I must lose my temper sometimes, but I cannot lose it for long"; a geniality which it took much to disturb, a digestion which it took more to impair; a power of work steady and uninterrupted; a healthy, devotional feeling (he was a devout Catholic); a strong sense of humour; a capacity for enjoying all the world's good things, without any morbid craving for irregular indulgence; affections warm but intense; a presence accepted and beloved; a mind contented almost anywhere, attaching supreme importance to one thing, and one thing only—the composing of music, and pursuing this object with the steady instinct of one who believed himself to have been sent into the world for that purpose alone. Such was Francis Joseph Haydn.

He told Carpani that at the thought of God his heart leaped for joy, and that he could not help his music, even his church music, doing the same. "I know," he said, "that God has bestowed a talent upon me, and I thank Him for it. I think I have done my duty and been of use in my generation; let others do the same." He was fond of dress, always liked to compose in his best clothes, and if he meant to do anything particularly well, he put on a ring which had been presented to him by the King of Prussia. An entirely lovable man; and his music, though some superior persons would fain call it old-fashioned, is just as lovable.

MOZART! IMMORTAL MOZART!

When I was very young, I used to say "I"; later on, I said "I and Mozart"; then "Mozart and I." Now I say "Mozart." —GOUNOD.

IT is now more than a hundred years since Mozart, once the pet of all the crowned heads of Europe, once the idol of the common people, expired, penniless, and almost neglected, and was laid to rest in a nameless grave, not one soul whom he had known in life standing by to see the coffin lowered. The records of musical history tell of no deathbed scene which leaves so deep an impression as that of Mozart. He had been commissioned to compose a *Requiem* and it was still uncompleted His last afternoon on earth had come. Supported by pillows, though already exhausted by fits of coughing, he made painful efforts to join his pupil Sussmayer and one or two other acquaintances in singing the chorus parts of the unfinished work. The most vivid imagination cannot picture a more distressing scene than the dying man, unable to speak, extending his cheeks to indicate to Sussmayer the places at which the wind instruments should be employed. The evening wore on slowly enough for the sad, wearied watchers, and as midnight drew near the dying composer with difficulty raised himself from his bed, opened his eyes wide, and then, turning his face to the wall, seemed to fall asleep. It was the last sleep: an hour later and the perturbed spirit was at rest for ever.

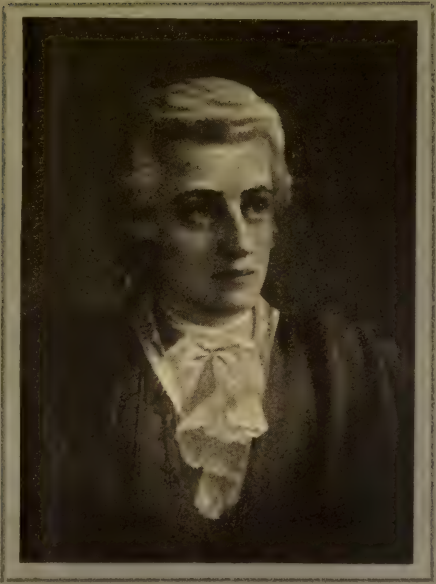
The body lay for the usual time, and as the days of the old year were slowly dying, Mozart took his last long journey. A poor, scanty, straggling procession is observed wending its way from the house to the Cathedral, where a short service is to be held prior to the interment in the burial-ground of St. Mark, then lying in the suburbs of Vienna, but now a veritable oasis in the desert of the enlarged city. As the coffin emerges from the Cathedral in the pouring rain, some who have been at the service disappear round the angles of the building, and are seen no more. Others shelter themselves as best they can, and trudge with the remains along the muddy streets. But even these cannot hold out to the end. "They all forsook him and fled." And so, unattended except by hirelings, the body was borne away into the dismal country, there to be laid with paupers in a common grave, the exact site of which no one was to know in the course of a few years. In 1809 some admirers wished to visit the grave, but they were told that the ashes of the poor were often exhumed to make room for others, and Mozart was as unknown at the cemetery as the other fifteen friendless unfortunates who had been buried the same week. To-day, in that great necropolis, the monument to Mozart stands over an empty grave.

Let us see what manner of life was lived by this immortal master of music, who laid it down under circumstances so painful before he was thirty-five. If he had not a long life, he had a long name, for they christened him John Chrysostom Wolfgang Theophilus Mozart. The Theophilus was early dropped for the more euphonious name of Amadeus, and more lately the John Chrysostom was, in common usage, cut away entirely. Leopold Mozart, the father, was himself a professional musician: an excellent violinist and organist, and Court composer to the Archbishop of Salzburg. He is pictured with his "old threadbare coat and oaken stick, a God-fearing, sensible, but somewhat narrow-minded man." He and his wife, the very model of a thrifty *hausfrau*, are said to have been the handsomest couple in that beautiful old town of Salzburg.

It was at Salzburg, in a very unpretentious dwelling, that Mozart was born, on the 27th of January 1756. The parents had seven children, but they all died in infancy except Wolfgang and Anna Maria, familiarly called Nannerl, who was to share some of her brother's triumphs as a musical prodigy. Wolfgang's talent discovered itself at the early age of three, when he would fix his attention on the harpsichord lessons being given to the seven-year old Nannerl. Even then, he would puzzle out little tunes on the instrument. Papa was, of course, overjoyed, and soon he had Wolfgang sharing Nannerl's lessons. He made special arrangements of little pieces for him, and wrote them out in a book. The book remains to this day, with the proud father's notes about his prodigy's progress. Thus: "Wolfgang learnt this minuet when he was four." "This minuet and trio were learnt by Wolfgang in half-an-hour, at half-past nine at night, on January 26, 1761, one day before his fifth year." And so on.

The boy must try his hand at composition, too. He wrote a concerto, and when he was told it was good but too difficult, he said: "Well, it must be practised till it is mastered," and then he showed the elders the way it should be played. Many years later, a young man asked Mozart to tell him how to compose. The gentle Wolfgang replied that the questioner was too young to be thinking of such a serious occupation. "But you were much younger when you began," protested the aspirant. "Ah, yes, that is true," Mozart said, with a smile; "but then, you see, I did not ask anybody how to compose." No! What was the use of lessons to a boy who would improvise fugues and then ride-a-cock-horse on his father's walking-stick?

Well, these wonder-children created such a sensation in local circles that Papa Mozart began to think he might make some money out of them. So, when Wolfgang was only six, the three started away on a concert tour. They went to Munich, where the youngsters astonished the Bavarian Court by their performances. Then they went to Vienna, where the boy, on their arrival, "squared" the Custom House officer by playing him a minuet on the violin. The trio were commanded to appear at Court, and Wolfgang immediately became a great pet there. He would jump into the Empress'



MOZART

lap, throw his arms round her neck, and cover her with kisses. The future unhappy Queen of France, Marie Antoinette, was particularly charmed with him, and one day, when she helped him up after a fall, he innocently said: "You *are* good, and when I am a man I will marry you." It was a pity he didn't!

All this was very gratifying to Papa Mozart, but he complained that there was no money in it. "If the kisses bestowed upon Wolfgang could be transformed into good louis d'or, we should have nothing to grumble at. The misfortune is that the hotel-keepers have no desire to be paid in kisses." At another time he wrote: "We have swords, laces, mantillas, snuff-boxes, gold cases, sufficient to furnish a shop; but as for money, it is a scarce article, and I am positively poor." It was only when they came to London in 1764, after being in Paris, that the Mozarts seem to have put money in their purse.

Here they played before George III. and his Queen, who gave them twenty-four guineas for each performance. Wolfgang, too, got fifty guineas for a set of six sonatas composed and dedicated to the Queen. There were public concerts also, the advertisements of which read quaintly enough to-day. Thus one concert is announced: "For the benefit of Miss Mozart, of eleven, and Master Mozart, of seven, prodigies of nature. Everybody will be astonished to hear a child of such tender age playing the harpsichord in such perfection. It surmounts all fantasy and imagination, and it is hard to express which is more astonishing, his execution upon the harpsichord, playing at sight, or his own composition." In another advertisement, "ladies and gentlemen who chuse to come" are told they will find the wonderful boy at home every day from twelve till two, and "have an opportunity of putting his talents to a more particular proof by giving him anything to play at sight, or any music without a bass, which he will write upon the spot without recurring to his harpsichord." In a third advertisement it was intimated that "the two children will play together with four hands upon the same harpsichord, and put upon it a handkerchief without seeing the keys."

Mozart had been over a year in London when he left it in July 1765, never to return. The scholastic side of his training had yet to be seen to, and the boy, making his way through Holland and France, playing as he went, now returned to Salzburg, and settled down to serious theoretical study. It is a matter of debate among his biographers whether the feverish excitement of these prodigy exhibitions did not undermine his constitution and help to bring about his early death. It is likely enough. The precious days of youth should be devoted primarily to the storing up of health, without which lasting success is impossible. Nothing is more harmful to sound physical development and mental growth than the strain of extensive tours; and it can hardly be doubted that Mozart's health suffered a serious check by the unnatural way in which his talent was stimulated in his earlier years. Still, it would be unfair to blame his father entirely, as some writers have done. Leopold Mozart's after life sufficiently proves that his desire was unselfish, and that his heart was set on the welfare of his offspring. "God," he said, "has endowed my children with such genius that, laying aside my duty as a father, my ambition urges me to sacrifice all else to their education."

After the tours, then, the education began in real earnest. By the time he was fourteen, Mozart was generally considered to have mastered the whole technique of his art, and to himself nothing seemed necessary by way of finishing touch but a journey to Italy. Every young composer had that ambition in the old days. Some never realised it; Mozart did. When he got to Rome his first consideration was to hear the music in the Pope's chapel. And here an interesting incident has to be recorded. Twice a year a celebrated *Misereri* by Allegri, an early seventeenth-century composer, was performed by the choir, but the work, which existed only in MS., was so highly esteemed that to copy it was a crime visited with excommunication. Young Mozart nevertheless determined that he would secure a copy, and after two hearings he had the whole thing so perfectly on paper that next year Dr. Burney, the musical historian, was able to publish it in London. All the great composers had wonderful memories, but Mozart stood pre-eminent. He had a constant habit of playing his concertos in public without a "bit" of music. In a concert at Leipzig, some three years before his death, he performed his concerto in C. The band all in readiness, Mozart sat down to the piano to begin the composition. What was the surprise of the audience, however, to see him place on the desk, not his part, but a small piece of paper scribbled with a few notes to remind him how some of the passages began. "Oh," he replied, upon being questioned by a friend, "the piano part is safely locked up in my desk at Vienna. I am obliged to take this precaution when travelling, otherwise people contrive somehow or other to get copies of my scores and print them—while I starve." Of course all the virtuosi play from memory now, but the accomplishment was rarer in Mozart's day.

The young composer's progress through the Italian cities was a continued triumph. The Pope decorated him, looking upon his surreptitious copying of the jealously-guarded *Misereri* as too wonderful to be condemned. Poets made rhymes about him ; medals were struck in his honour. When he was playing at Naples, the audience took it into their heads that a ring which he wore on his finger was a talisman, and interrupted the performance until he removed it, when he played more brilliantly than before. Everywhere the same enthusiasm was manifested. In fact it would only be wasting valuable space to dwell further on Mozart's youthful triumphs. The record might be extended to portentous length, but, as one biographer has said, apart from the proof which these successes furnish of his extraordinary precocity, they are of little vital significance in the great problem of his career, except so far as they stimulated the marvellous boy to lay a deep foundation for his greater future.

We may, therefore, pass over a year or two and pick him up at 1777, when he went to Paris with his mother, half intending to make Paris his future residence. Unhappily, soon after their arrival his mother died. Then he found he could not get on with the French. "The French are, and always will be, downright donkeys," he said. "They cannot sing; they scream." He declared that their language had been invented by the devil. He objected also to their coarseness and their frivolity. "The ungodly arch-villain, Voltaire, has died like a dog," he wrote. Mozart was deeply religious, and Voltaire's atheism shocked him. "I have always had God before my eyes," he once wrote. "Friends who have no religion cannot long be my friends." And we recognise the loving unspoiled heart of a boy in the young man's words, "Next to God comes papa." In this matter of religious feeling he was like his friend Haydn. He returned to Germany in 1779, thoroughly disgusted with French music and musicians. This was the dawn of his classical period as a composer. And what hardships he had to endure! At Mannheim, where he had settled, lack of money pinched him close. "I have only one room," he told his father; "it is quite crammed with a piano, a table, a bed, and a chest of drawers." Yet he, too, like Haydn in similar circumstances, proposed to marry! He had fallen in love, and the episode makes a very pretty story. At Mannheim there lived a certain orchestral copyist and stage prompter named Weber, an uncle, by the way, of the composer of *Der Freischütz*. Weber had a daughter, Aloysia, a girl of fifteen, pretty and musical. Mozart was engaged to teach her singing, and she engaged herself to *him*—temporarily. Mozart was only twenty-three at this time, and he was still largely dependent on his father, who advised him to "get the great folks on your side" before thinking of marriage. But Mozart would listen to no warning. He even proposed to take Aloysia to Salzburg "to make the acquaintance of dear papa"; hoping, of course, that papa would give way when he discovered the lady's charms and accomplishments.

But papa would have nothing to do with Aloysia, even when told that she sang divinely and played sonatas at first sight. In the meanwhile Aloysia had obtained an engagement at the Munich Theatre. There she achieved a success, and the success turned her little head. An impecunious musician for a husband was now quite out of the question, and she frankly said so. Mozart bore the trial very well for a sensitive, emotional young man of twenty-four. He even wrote to his father: "I was a fool about Aloysia, I own; but what is a man not when in love?" Aye, what not, indeed!

Mozart was not long in making a fool of himself again. Aloysia had married an actor by this time; but copyist Weber had three daughters still on his hands, and one of them took Mozart's fancy. He could not help himself. Constance Weber had "a pair of bright, black eyes and a pretty figure"; she was "kind-hearted, clever, modest, good-tempered, economical, neat." It was utterly untrue, as Mozart *père* had asserted, that she was extravagant. On the contrary, she dressed her own hair, understood housekeeping, and had the best heart in the world. Mozart loved her with his "whole soul," and she loved him. Mozart wanted a wife to look after his linen, and because he could not live like the fast young men around him. What more was to be said? A good deal, at any rate by "dear papa," who took the common-sense view that Wolfgang should wait until he could afford to keep a wife. Wolfgang, like the wayward son in the novel, held a different opinion. "Constance," he wrote to his father, "is a well-conducted, good girl, of respectable parentage, and I am in a position to earn at least daily bread for her. We love each other and are resolved to marry. All that you have written, or may possibly write, on this subject can be nothing but well-meant advice, which, however good and sensible, can no longer apply to a man who has gone so far with a girl. There can therefore be no question of further delay." This was emphatic enough. The letter was followed immediately by another, asking consent to an early marriage. As no reply came, Mozart took silence for consent, and, in the summer of 1782, celebrated a quiet wedding at St. Stephen's, Vienna (where Haydn had been married twenty-two years before), his bride being eighteen and himself twenty-six.

Was it, then, a happy wedded life upon which Mozart thus entered? So far as can be gathered from his letters, it was—for him. Indeed, if we look at Frau Mozart with her husband's loving eyes, we shall see no fault in her from first to last. But unfortunately Constance knew next to nothing about housekeeping; and as Mozart himself soared far above such mundane things, the home was too often the scene of untidiness and disorder, to which the perpetual worry of pecuniary embarrassments added anything but a pleasing flavour. There is a pathetically significant story to the effect that a friend called one winter day, and found Mozart and his wife waltzing round the room. "We were cold," they explained, "and we have no wood to make a fire." Think of that, and then think of the glorious works Mozart produced under such depressing conditions! And, to whatever extent his wife may have been to blame for the irregularities and shortcomings of the household, he at least never grumbled. His devotion to her was of that simple and childlike nature which makes sunshine in the house, even when the prospect seems darkest. When he went travelling he carried the portrait of his Constance in his breast, and sent her a daily letter, couched in the most endearing terms. In one letter he "encloses" her 1,095,060,437,082 kisses! And so the chequered, yet withal happy, life went on to the end. Almost his last written words were addressed by Mozart to his wife: "The hour strikes. Farewell! We shall meet again."

Within the nine years of the composer's married life four sons and two daughters were born to him. Only two of the sons, Karl and Wolfgang Amadeus, survived. The latter adopted his father's profession, and died at Carlsbad in 1844. Karl was a modest

Austrian official, "a book-keeper of some kind," and died at Milan in 1858. Neither of the two married, and so there is not a single descendant of Mozart alive to-day. His beloved sister, the prodigy Nannerl, became a handsome woman; married (in 1784) a widower with several children; and died in 1829, twenty-eight years after her husband. She was all her life devoted to music. She even composed a few pieces, and was an excellent teacher as well as performer. Mozart's widow, it may be convenient to add here, remarried and long outlived her husband, dying as late as 1842. She had inspired her new consort (his name was Nissen) with such devotion to Mozart's fame that he wrote a eulogistic biography of the composer. There cannot be many instances of a second husband doing that sort of thing for the first.

Mozart's marriage was very nearly coincident with his serious start as a composer. With a wife and a young family growing up around him, he was spurred to endeavour in their interests. He settled in Vienna, where Haydn already was, and where Beethoven and Schubert would soon be; and there he burnt himself out, like a torch expending its light in the wind. As an American writer has said, poverty and increasing expense pricked him into intense, restless energy. His life now had no lull in its creative industry. His splendid genius, unsatiable and tireless, broke down his body, like a sword wearing out its scabbard. He poured out symphonies (forty-nine in all), operas, and sonatas with a prodigality positively staggering, even when we recollect how fertile musical genius has often been. Alike as artist and composer, he never ceased his labours. Day after day and night after night he hardly snatched an hour's rest. We can almost fancy he foreboded how short his life was to be, and felt impelled to crowd into its brief compass its largest measure of results.

His greatest works of these years—nay, the greatest works of his life—are the operas of *Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Il Flauto Magico*, a trio that have maintained their artistic supremacy despite the many changes occurring in musical taste during a century. Of the three, perhaps the greatest is *Don Giovanni*. The story has often been told how Mozart began the composition with his usual energy, appeared to get indifferent, and put off the work till near the time fixed for its production at Prague. To Prague he journeyed to finish the score; and it is said that he wrote a considerable part of the work in a summerhouse while he kept up a conversation with some gentlemen playing bowls near by. The overture, at any rate, was entirely written after midnight, the day before it was required for the first performance, and there was barely time for the copyist to write out the parts before the beginning of the opera, which, indeed, was somewhat delayed on that account. And yet, all that Mozart received for this immortal work was £20. A present-day copyist would get more than that for merely transcribing it. The prices paid to Mozart for some of his operas were incredibly and ridiculously small. In those days nobody seemed to think of the productions of musical genius as a marketable commodity. Even literary men were not paid at so much per thousand words then.

And, alas! there was little money to be obtained by other means. Mozart tried frequent tours to recruit his finances, but the returns were so small that, to purchase a meal, he would often pawn the gifts showered on him. There is an authentic story of his pawning his plate in order to get to Frankfort for the coronation of the Emperor. Audiences would carry him to his hotel on their shoulders and—leave him to beg for his dinner. So he struggled on through his last years, with the wolf constantly at the door, and with an invalid wife, whom he passionately loved, yet must needs see suffer, not only from the lack of alleviating medicines, but from the lack of the common necessaries of life. Mr. Haweis says it is difficult to account for all this. But let us remember that Mozart's purse was always open to his friends, and that he was obliged to mix on equal terms with his superiors in rank. He was open-handed almost to criminality, as when he once, in the course of a tour, lent a total stranger a hundred francs. There may have been bad management in the home, but we cannot read Mozart's letters and accuse him of wanton extravagance. He had the social character and the failings of his time and environment—that was all. And then he was such a poor business man. He lost a golden chance of bettering his fortunes under the patronage of the King of

Prussia. He had almost made up his mind to accept the King's offer, and came to the Emperor Leopold, more than half prepared to resign a small post he held. "What! do you mean to forsake me, Mozart?" ejaculated the Emperor. Emotionally touched, Mozart replied: "May it please your Majesty, I will stay." When friends asked him afterwards if he had not thought of obtaining some little piece of imperial favour by way of compensation at the time, and with such a powerful lever in his hand, he answered innocently, "Who would have thought of that on such an occasion?" This shows the character of the man. Who would *not* have thought of it?

In 1791 the composer entered upon his thirty-sixth and last year. His wife had been at Baden for her health, and when she returned she noticed with alarm a pallor more fatal than her own upon her husband's face. Mozart, weak and ill, had grown silent and melancholy. And that *Requiem* commission, referred to at the outset, had been preying on his mind. It is a weird story, and may be told as recorded by Dr. Nohl. One day an unknown messenger appeared at Mozart's door: a tall, haggard man, dressed in grey, with a sombre expression of countenance: a most singular figure, quite calculated to make an uncanny expression. This man brought Mozart an anonymous letter, in which he was asked to name the sum he would take to write a Mass for the dead. Mozart accepted the commission, and fixed the price at fifty ducats. Shortly afterwards the messenger returned, paid the money, and promised an additional honorarium when the *Requiem* was completed. Mozart was told at the same time to spare himself the trouble of trying to find out the name of his employer, as that must remain a secret.

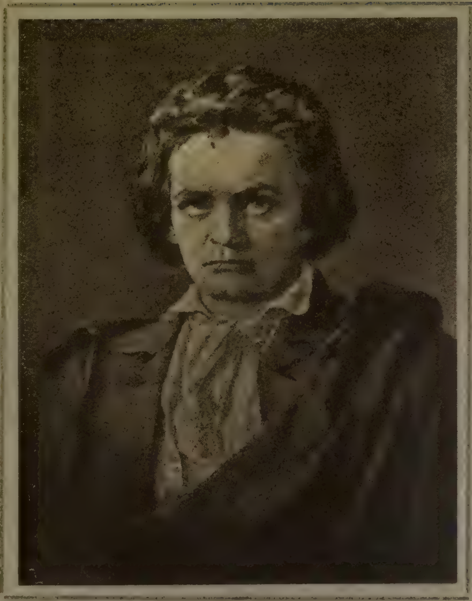
Mozart began the composition at once. But he could not get rid of the uncomfortable idea suggested by the mystery of the commission, and the fact that the work was for the dead. It soon preyed on his mind; and one day, after he had been toiling at it, he said, with tears in his eyes: "I well know that I am writing this *Requiem* for myself." So it proved, as we have already seen. Enough has been said on that point. But who was the mysterious person who commissioned this fateful work? He was a certain Count Walsegg, who wanted to pose as a composer, and who, having at length got the *Requiem* as completed by Mozart's pupil, Sussmayer, had a transcript made, and performed the work as his own. The fraud was ultimately discovered, but not before the conceited Count had gained a measure of fame by decking himself out in the borrowed plumes of the dead master.

Mozart's death took place on December 5, 1791. Success was just about to come to him, as it was about to come to Schubert when *he* was called away. As he lay there, with swollen limbs and burning head, Vienna was ringing with the fame of his last opera. They brought him, too, the well-paid appointment of organist of St. Stephen's Cathedral, where Haydn had sung as a choir boy; where he and Mozart had been married. Managers besieged his door with handfuls of gold pleading with him to compose something for them. Too late! too late now! Mozart had answered another call. One cannot help moralising on the sad fate of genius cut off while its powers are still in the ascendant. Schubert died at thirty-one, Mozart at thirty-five, Purcell and Bizet (the composer of *Carmen*) at thirty-seven, Mendelssohn at thirty-eight, Chopin at thirty-nine, and Schumann at forty-six. Think if Mozart had seen Bach's sixty-five summers; if Schubert, born with Mercadante in 1797, had died with Mercadante in 1870! What grand creations might we not have had to add to the world's heritage of music!

Mozart might be described as a sort of Peter Pan who never grew up. He was always the sublime child. All his adult life he suffered from abnormal restiveness. His barber has told what a trouble it was to shave him. No sooner was he seated, his neck encircled with a cloth, than he became lost in thought and oblivious of all around him. Then, without a word, he would jump up, move about the room, pass often into the adjoining one, while, comb or razor in hand, the hairdresser followed him. At table it was frequently necessary to recall him to a sense of his surroundings, for his fits of abstraction would recur continually, and directly an inspiration seized him he forgot everything else. He would twist and untwist a corner of his dinner napkin, pass it mechanically under his nose, making at the same time the most extraordinary and grotesque grimaces. Musical geniuses are apt to behave in that way. Wagner sometimes stood on his head, and Beethoven washed his hands in the middle of the room and emptied the basin on the floor.

As a man, barring perhaps his improvidence, Mozart was wholly admirable, though, along with Schubert, he has suffered from the charge of being dissipated. Considering that in his short life he produced the prodigious total of 769 compositions, ranging from the very largest to the simplest song forms, his failings in this direction must have been very venial. His portraits show him to have been a handsome man, though of slight build, with an ample forehead, regular features, cleft chin, dreamy eyes, and well-arched brows. His hair, of which he was rather vain, is of course powdered and in a tie; and he wears the high-collared, large-buttoned coat, plain neckcloth, and wide-frilled shirt of the period. He was always pale, and he had a pleasant though not striking face. Under excitement his eyes lost their languid look. One who was present at the rehearsal of *Figaro* wrote: "I shall never forget Mozart's little countenance when lighted up with the glowing rays of genius. It is as impossible to describe it as it would be to paint sunbeams." In some reminiscences his widow said that he "loved all the arts and possessed a taste for most of them. He could draw, and was an excellent dancer. His voice was a light tenor; his speaking tone gentle, unless when directing music, when he became loud and energetic—would even stamp with his feet and might be heard at a considerable distance. His hands were very small and delicate. His favourite amusements were bowls and billiards." To all this the enthusiastic widow added: "He was an angel, and is one in heaven now." Mozart was very particular about his clothes, and wore a good deal of embroidery and jewelry. On the whole he was perhaps insignificant-looking, but he did not like to be made aware of the fact, or to have his small stature commented on. It should perhaps be stated that he had a peculiarly-shaped ear passage, much smaller than usual, which may or may not have had a bearing on his musical sensibility. The lobe of the left ear was thicker than that of the right, a peculiarity also possessed by Haydn.

Mozart's musical greatness has been acknowledged by all his fellow composers. Weber, Mendelssohn and Wagner praised him in enthusiastic terms. Meyerbeer's eyes became moist when speaking of him. "Who is your favourite among the great masters?" Rossini was once asked. "Beethoven," he replied, "I take twice a week, Haydn four times, and Mozart every day." Once he put it even more pointedly than this. He had been speaking to a friend about Beethoven, whom he called the greatest of all musicians. "What, then, of Mozart?" he was asked. "Oh," returned the sprightly Rossini, "Mozart is not the greatest, he is the *only* musician in the world." Ferdinand David said finely that "Mozart was music made man." And finally we may quote Schubert. "O Mozart!" said he, "immortal Mozart! how many and what countless images of a brighter, better world hast thou stamped on our souls."



BEETHOVEN

THE DEAF BEETHOVEN

For years I have avoided almost all society, because I cannot tell people *I am deaf.* I have to appear as a misanthrope ; I, who am so little of one.—BEETHOVEN.

WHAT musician, going up the Rhine, would fail to make a call at the pretty university town of Bonn, where Ludwig van Beethoven was born in the December of 1770? There, to-day, stands a memorial monument, on the pedestal of which is engraved, in all its rugged simplicity and appropriateness, the one word "BEETHOVEN." And there, too, in a side street known as the Bonngasse, one may see the identical house whose lowly walls echoed to the infant cries of this musical giant who bound the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. For many years the house was given over to common and even ignoble uses ; but at last, in 1889, it was purchased (for nearly £3000) by a number of Beethoven enthusiasts, and now it is filled with relics of Beethoven interest, which every admirer of the great master loves to see.

Beethoven came of a musical family, for his grandfather was a kapellmeister, while his father, a tenor singer, filled a small musical post in the establishment of the Elector of Cologne. The grandfather was born in Antwerp, but he quarrelled with his parents there, and went off to Bonn in 1732. His wife, Beethoven's grandmother, took to drink, and Beethoven's father did the same. The father was, in fact, a confirmed sot, loafing about the beer-houses, and boasting to his muddled companions about his boy's gifts and his bright future. He had heard of the prodigy Mozart and the money *he* brought to his parents, and he conceived the idea of exploiting his own son for the same purpose.

True, his son was no prodigy: on the contrary, he early showed a positive dislike for music. Nevertheless, the father kept him slaving away at the piano, and would often give him a beating when he evinced a disinclination to practise. We read of the little fellow being dragged from bed and set down to the instrument when the drunken father would come home late at night. The parent's conduct cast a deep gloom over Beethoven's youth; and it can hardly be doubted that the drudgery he imposed and the misery he caused in the house formed the germs of suspicion and misanthropy which afterwards so markedly showed themselves in Beethoven's character. The miserable toper ended his life at last by his own hand, but not before Beethoven, at the age of nineteen, had been officially appointed head of the family.

In process of time the future composer's musical sensibilities awakened, and having been sent to the Court organist for lessons, he made such progress that before he was twelve he was deputising for his master at the Court chapel. At thirteen he became a "cembalist"—a pianist, as we would say—in the theatre orchestra. And thereby hangs a tale. One of the singers, a man named Keller, had been boasting of his correct ear, and declaring that Beethoven could not "throw him out." A wager was ultimately accepted on the point. During an interlude in one piece, Beethoven modulated to a key so remote that, though he struck the note which Keller should have taken up, Keller was defeated, and came to a dead stand. Exasperated by the laughter of the audience, he complained of Beethoven to the Elector, who gave the cembalist "a most gracious reprimand," and told him not to play any more clever tricks of that sort.

Beethoven seems to have had no regular course of theoretical instruction in his native town; but when he was seventeen he managed to get to Vienna, where he met Mozart and had some lessons from him. "Mind, you will hear that boy talked of," said Mozart to a friend after Beethoven had played to him. Beethoven subsequently met Haydn, who first encouraged him to persevere with his studies, and then took him for a pupil. Beethoven refused to describe himself as Haydn's pupil on the title-pages of his early works, because, as he said, "I never learnt anything from him." But this was mere perversity. The truth was that he and Haydn did not pull well together. How could they? Their natures were totally different; and Beethoven, self-willed and passionate, must have been an unmanageable pupil with any master. Besides, Haydn was now an old man, and he may not have had time or inclination to attend to his pupil as the pupil thought necessary. At any rate, Beethoven left Haydn and put himself under Albrechtsberger, then organist of Vienna Cathedral, who conducted him through the "arid wastes of ingenuity," and made him write as many exercises as would have served for a generation of young composers.

In the meantime Beethoven had lost his sweet, patient mother, who died of consumption at the age of forty-one, leaving the young musician, on his return to Bonn, to manage as best he could his dissipated father and the domestic concerns of the family. Happily he made friends of several influential people, who helped him in his home struggles, and did kindly offices of various kinds for him. And Bonn soon saw him for the last time. He left it when he was twenty-two, and he never went back. There were no family ties to recall him, and the fulfilment of his manifest destiny required that he should live in Vienna.

So, then, to Vienna we go with him. There he gradually made name and fame for himself among the dilettante aristocracy, in whose houses he was a frequent and favoured guest. As a player he never showed any extraordinary facility and dexterity, but his *style* was arresting, and as an extemporiser he was unrivalled. When he played, his muscles swelled and his eyes rolled wildly. He "seemed like a magician overmastered by the spirits that he conjured up." He began to appear in public; and in 1796 he got as far as Berlin, where he played before the King and was treated with appreciative distinction.

So far, he had not composed much; and indeed it was not till close on thirty that he produced his first symphony, the great C major. Nearly all his earlier works were roundly abused by the critics. One spoke of a certain composition as "the confused explosions of a talented young man's overweening conceit." Another compared the second symphony with a monster, "a dragon wounded to death and unable to die, threshing around with its tail in impotent rage." Of the seventh symphony even Weber declared that "the extravagances of this genius have reached the *ne plus ultra*, and Beethoven is quite ripe for the madhouse." It is really amusing to turn up some of the old newspaper notices and read them now. This, for example: "Mr. Van Beethoven goes his own path, and a dreary, eccentric, and tiresome path it is: learning, learning, and nothing but learning, but not a bit of nature or melody. And, after all, it is but a crude and undigested learning, without method or arrangement, a seeking after curious modulations, a hatred of ordinary progressions, a heaping up of difficulties, until all the pleasure and patience are lost." That was how Beethoven's contemporaries regarded his earlier works. Then, of course, when deafness came upon him, they turned still more sarcastic. He could not hear, they said: how could he understand what horrors of sound he was evolving? When his *Fidelio* was first performed in 1805, they declared that never before had anything so incoherent, coarse, wild, and ear-splitting been heard; and they attributed it largely to his physical defect. They had not yet learnt, apparently, that the really great composer is always in advance of his time.

Once having got the rush, Beethoven's musical inspirations came so profusely that he soon had several works going on at the same time, and had no little difficulty in keeping separate the several developments. His ideas poured forth like volcanic eruptions. His usual practice was to jot them down roughly, as they came into his head, in little sketch books, which were filled up in a most eccentric way—notes scribbled down as often as not without any stave at all, and at certain distances apart, which were evidently intended as vague substitutes for lines and spaces. In his younger days he spent much time in the woods and the open country, and it was there that the "raptus" would most generally find him. "No man on earth can love the country as I do," he said. But the country was not the same to him when he could not hear the birds. Then he would stamp and stride about his room like a caged lion, singing and shouting the themes that were coursing through his brain, and thrashing them out in a wild way on the piano.

And this brings us to the great tragic fact of Beethoven's career—his deafness, which came upon him in 1800, after he had published the thirty-two sonatas, three concertos, two symphonies, nine trios, and numerous smaller works. In all musical biography there is nothing so terrible to read about as the deafness of

Beethoven. For a musician to lose his sight is calamity enough, and several musicians besides Bach and Handel have suffered it. But the blind musician can still hear his own creations. The deaf musician may write, as Beethoven wrote, some of the grandest inspirations ever given to the world, but while others are hearing these inspirations, *he* cannot hear. Such was Beethoven's painful experience. It is staggering to reflect that he never himself felt the thrill of that noble music of his own, produced in his later years.

> Yet it is thus, and ever thus—
> The glory is in giving ;
> Those monarchs taste a deathless joy
> That agonised while living.

This distressing affliction of Beethoven's life had begun to show itself as early as 1778, but it was two years later before it became acute. When he awoke to his danger, a cry of woe went forth that touched the hearts of all his friends, who, alas! with the most skilful aurists, were powerless to help.

" How miserable my future life will be," he exclaims, —"to have to shun all that is most dear to me! Oh, how happy I should be if I had my perfect hearing ; but as it is, my best years will fly away without my being able to do all that my talent and power would have bid me do. I can say that I spend a most miserable life ; for two years I have been shunning all society, because I find it impossible to tell the people 'I am deaf.' If I were of any other profession, this deficiency would not be felt, but with my music, it is a terrible condition to be in. Add to this, my enemies—not a few in number—what will they say to it?"

In the theatre he had to lay his ears close to the orchestra in order to understand the actors; and the higher notes of the instruments and voices he could not hear at all when only a little distance away. "When in conversation," he says, "I often wonder that some people never get acquainted with my state, but, having much amusement, their attention is drawn away. Sometimes I can scarcely hear a soft speaker—I hear some sounds but no words; however, as soon as some one screams out to me—this is unbearable." Who can gauge the mental anguish of a musician thus tortured. Read this: "He softly struck a full chord. Never will another so woefully, with such a melancholy effect, pierce my soul. With his right hand he held the chord of C major, and in the bass he struck B, looking at me and repeating—in order to let the sweet tone of his piano fully come out—*the wrong chord*—and the greatest musician in the world did not hear the dissonance!" These are the words of an eye-witness, written in the year 1825. The "greatest musician in the world" struck a wrong chord, and he had no hearing to acquaint him with the fact!

Several efforts were made by the surgeons to alleviate the malady, but while some of these gave a little temporary relief, the clouds gathered thicker and darker than ever, and in the end every ray of hope became obscured. Need we be surprised that Beethoven took to debating with himself whether life was really worth living? He did indeed discuss the question seriously in his own mind, and it was only after a keen struggle that virtue and art prevailed. "I will meet my fate fearlessly, and it shall not wholly overwhelm me," he said. It was about this time that he wrote that pitiful letter to his brothers which was to be opened only after his death. It begins: "Oh, ye who think or declare me to be hostile, morose, and misanthropical, how unjust you are, and how little you know the secret cause of what appears to you! My heart and mind were ever from childhood prone to the most tender feelings of affection, and I was always disposed to accomplish something great. But you must remember that six years ago I was attacked by an incurable malady, aggravated by unskilful physicians, deluded from year to year, too, by the hope of relief, and at length forced to the conviction of a lasting affliction."

Proceeding to detail, he says: "Alas! how could I proclaim the deficiency of a sense which ought to have been more perfect with me than with other men? Alas! I cannot do this. Forgive me, therefore, when you see me withdraw from you with whom I would so gladly mingle. Completely isolated, I only enter society when compelled to do so. I must live like an exile." In the country he was thrown into the deepest melancholy. "What humiliation when any one beside me heard a flute in the far distance, and I heard *nothing*; or when others heard a shepherd singing, and I heard *nothing*. Such things brought me to the verge of desperation, and well-nigh caused me to put an end to my life. Art, art alone deterred me." Was there ever such a wail of despair? "I joyfully hasten to meet death," he writes at another time. "If death come before I have had the opportunity of developing my artistic powers, then, notwithstanding my cruel fate, he will come too early for me, and I should wish for him at a more distant period. But even then I shall be content, for his advent will release me from a state of endless suffering."

In that birth-house museum at Bonn we have the most melancholy signs of Beethoven's deafness. There are the ear-trumpets and the pianoforte by whose help he strove so long and so hopelessly to remain in communion with the world of sound. The piano was made specially for him, with extra strings. So long as he could hear a tone, Beethoven used this instrument. Then Maelzel, the metronome man, who invented and made the ear-trumpets for him, built a resonator for the piano. It was fixed on the instrument so that it covered a portion of the sounding-board and projected over the keys. "Seated before the piano, his head all but inside the wooden shell, one of the ear-trumpets held in place by an encircling brass band, Beethoven would pound upon the keys till the strings jangled discordantly with the violence of the percussion, or flew asunder with shrieks as of mortal despair." Though the ear-trumpets had been useless for five years, they were kept in Beethoven's study till his death. Then they found their way into the Royal Library at Berlin, where they remained until Emperor William II. presented them to the Bonn collection.

The deafness affected Beethoven in other than professional affairs. Directly or indirectly, it prevented him marrying, as he had wished to do. As a young man he had been very sensible to the charms of female society. Ladies would knit him comforters, and make him light puddings, and he would even condescend to lie on their sofas after dinner while they played his sonatas. His early friend Wegeler says that he was never without a love affair; and these affairs took, in more than one case, the serious form of an offer of marriage. But no bride was Beethoven destined to bring to the altar. Writing to his pupil Ries in 1816 he says: "My best wishes to your wife. Unfortunately I have none. I found One only, and her I have no chance of ever calling mine." The "one only" was most likely the "immortal beloved" of the passionate letters found in the composer's desk after his death—the beautiful Giulietta, Countess Guicciardi, to whom the so-called "Moonlight" sonata is dedicated. The Countess married a Count Gallenberg, and Beethoven said of the marriage: "Heaven forgive her, for she did not know what she was doing!" He wrote further: "I was much loved by her—far better than she ever loved her husband." But Beethoven was poor, in bad health, and—deaf; and marriage in his case was out of the question. One does not fancy that he would commend himself as a possible husband. A man who afterwards threw books and even chairs at the head of a stupid, dishonest servant, was a trifle too tempestuous for a domestic companion. And, indeed, he came to realise this himself, for he said he was "excessively glad that not one of the girls had become his wife, whom he had passionately loved in former days, and thought at the time it would be the highest joy on earth to possess." Alas! poor Beethoven.

And this may serve us as a suggestion for introducing some details of Beethoven's character as a man, and of his general relations towards life and his fellows. In his younger years he was rather particular about his appearance. Before he left Bonn, we find him wearing a sea-green dress coat, green short-clothes with buckles, silk stockings, white flowered waistcoat with gold lace, white cravat, frizzed hair tied in a queue behind, and a sword. When he went first to Vienna he dressed in the height of fashion, sported a seal ring, and carried a double eyeglass. Later, he became extremely negligent about his person. An artist who painted his portrait in 1815 described him as wearing a pale-blue dress coat with yellow buttons, white waistcoat and necktie, but his whole aspect bespeaking disorder. Even if he did dress neatly, nothing could prevent him removing his coat if it were warm, not even in the presence of princes or ladies. Geniuses are generally Bohemian, often *outré*. Beethoven was no exception. He began by disdaining to have his hair cut. He wanted a servant, and one applicant mentioned the accomplishment of hair-dressing. "It is no object to me to have my hair dressed," growled Beethoven. Remembering the characteristic portraits, one agrees with him. Fancy a portrait of Beethoven with those fine Jupiter Olympus locks reduced to order!

But it was not his hair only that he refrained from dressing: he hardly even, as we would say, dressed himself. When Czerny first saw him in his rooms, he found him clad in a loose, hairy stuff, which made him rather more like Robinson Crusoe than the leading musician in Europe. His ears were filled with wool, which he had soaked in some yellow substance; his beard showed more than half an inch of growth; and his hair stood up in a thick shock that betokened an unacquaintance with comb and brush for many a day. Moscheles tells that he could not be made to understand clearly why he should not stand in his nightshirt at the open window; and when he attracted a crowd of juveniles by this eccentricity, he inquired with perfect simplicity "what those confounded boys were hooting at."

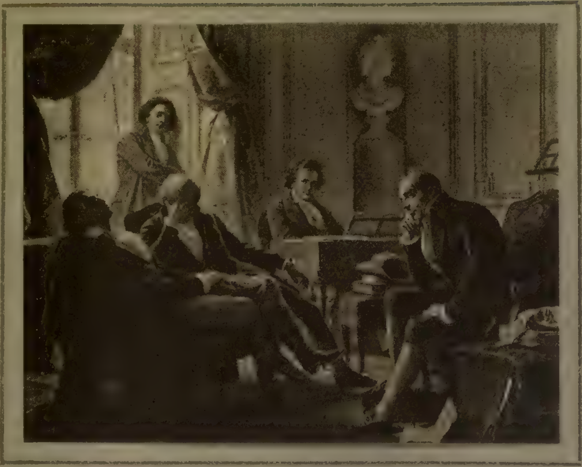
He seems to have been rather fond of the open window, for he generally shaved there. He "cut himself horribly," according to one biographer, and doing it at the window he enabled the people in the street to share in the diversion. He had none of the graces of deportment which we expect from the modern artist. It was dangerous for him to touch anything fragile, for he was sure to break it. More than once, in a fit of passion, he flung his inkstand among the wires of the piano. He had a habit, when composing, of pouring cold water over his hands, and the people below him often suffered from a miniature flood in consequence. When he first arrived in Vienna he took dancing lessons, but, curiously enough in a musician, could never dance in time. He was absent-minded to the point of insanity. Whether he dined or not was immaterial to him, and there is one authentic instance of his having urged on the waiter payment for a meal which he had neither ordered nor eaten. Somebody once presented him with a horse, but he forgot all about the animal, and had its existence recalled to him only when the bill for its keep was sent in. At one time he forgot his own name and the date of his birth! A friend, not having seen him for days, asked if he had been ill. "No," he said, "but my boots have, and as I have only one pair, I was condemned to house arrest." As a matter of fact he had a pair for every day of the week, though he forgot all about that too.

He was in perpetual trouble about his rooms and his servants. He would flit on the merest pretext, and usually it was himself who was in fault. He had no patience with any sort of conventional etiquette; and thus it often happened that he would prefer the discomforts of a bachelor's apartments to the free and luxurious housing offered him by more than one noble family. Baron Pronay prevailed upon him one summer to stay with him at Hetzendorf. But the Baron persisted in raising his hat to him whenever they met, and Beethoven was so annoyed by this that he took up his lodgings with a poor clockmaker near by. He seems to have been specially opposed to this act of courtesy. Once when he was walking along the street, he met a group of society notables, among whom he observed a particular friend of his own; but the revulsion against empty formalities was so strong in him that he kept his hat tight on his head and passed by on the other side.

Every lodging turned out worse than its predecessor. Either the chimneys smoked, or the rain came through the roof, or the chairs were rickety, or the doors creaked on their hinges, or something else interfered with the comfort of the occupant. And then the servants—oh, the servants! But really Beethoven was over-exacting here. Nancy might indeed be "too uneducated for a housekeeper," but surely the fact of her telling a lie did not imply, as Beethoven said it implied, that she could not make good soup. "The cook's off again," he tells one of his correspondents, who could hardly be surprised at the news when he learned that Beethoven had punished the cook for the staleness of the eggs by throwing the whole batch, one by one, at her head. This habit of throwing the dishes at the heads of domestics who displeased him had its comic aspect for the onlookers, but it cannot have been pleasant for the domestics. And the waiters suffered too. On one occasion when he was dining at a restaurant the waiter brought him a wrong dish. Beethoven had no sooner uttered some words of reproof (to which the offender retorted in no very polite fashion) than he took the dish of stewed beef and gravy and discharged it at the waiter's head. The poor man was heavily loaded with plates full of different viands, so that he could not move his arms. The gravy meanwhile trickled down his face. Both he and Beethoven swore and shouted, while the rest of the party roared with laughter. At last Beethoven himself joined in the merriment at the sight of the waiter, who was hindered from uttering any more invectives by the streams of gravy that found their way into his mouth.

It was probably after the cook went "off again" that Beethoven determined to try cooking for himself. Early in the morning he went off to the market, and the astonished neighbours saw him return home with a loaf of bread and a piece of meat, while greens and other vegetables peeped out of the pockets of his overcoat. Now for a time he left off playing and writing music, and devoted himself to the study of a popular cookery book. One day, when he thought himself sufficiently advanced in his new studies, he took it into his head to invite his best friends to a dinner prepared by himself. Everybody was naturally curious as to the result, and the guests were punctual to the minute. They found Beethoven busy in the kitchen with a nightcap on his head and a white apron before him.

After considerable waiting, they at length sat down to table. The composer himself was the waiter, but it is impossible to picture the dismay of the visitors and the horrors of that meal. A soup not unlike the famous black porridge of the Spartans, in which floated some shapeless and nondescript substances, a piece of boiled beef as tough as shoe-leather, half-cooked vegetables, a roast joint burnt to a cinder, and pudding like a lump of soapstone swimming in train oil—such was the



BEETHOVEN AND HIS FRIENDS

Beethoven dinner. The guests were unable to swallow a morsel. Beethoven alone ate with a keen appetite, praised every dish, and declared that the whole thing was a gigantic success. When they got into the street two hours afterwards with empty stomachs, his friends gave vent to their hilarity, and never, we may be sure. did they forget that Beethoven dinner.

The composer's behaviour to his pupils, even to ladies, was often atrocious. He would sometimes tear the music in shreds, and scatter it on the floor, or even smash the furniture. Once when an aristocratic pupil struck a wrong note he fled into the street without taking his hat from the hall. If he *did* consent to play in company he must have perfect silence and attention. On one occasion when this was denied him, he rose from the keyboard declaring that he would no longer play for "such hogs." He called Prince Lobkowitz an ass, and he called Hummel a "false dog." In Mme. Ertmann's drawing-room he took up the snuffers and used it as a tooth-pick.

As a conductor he was little more use than to raise a laugh. We read that "now he would vehemently spread out his arms; then when he wanted to indicate soft passages, he would bend down lower and lower until he disappeared from sight. Then as the music grew louder he would emerge, and at the *fortissimo* he would spring up into the air." One time when playing a concerto he forgot himself, jumped from his seat, and began to conduct. At the very outset he knocked the two candles from the piano. The audience roared.

Beethoven, quite beside himself, began the piece again. The director now stationed a boy on each side of the piano to hold the candles. The same scene was reenacted. One of the boys dodged the outstretched arm; the other, interested in the music, did not notice, and received the full blow in the face, falling in a heap, candle and all! "The audience," says Siegfried, who conducted, "broke out into a truly bacchanal howl of delight, and Beethoven was so enraged that when he started again, he smashed half a dozen strings at a single chord." Such was this Colossus of music when he lost his temper.

But he had a sense of humour, too, and now and again would indulge in the most boyish of horse-play and practical jokes. He could even make fun of his troubles with servants. Writing to Holz a note of invitation to dinner, he says: "Friday is the only day on which the old witch, who certainly would have burned two hundred years ago, can cook decently, because on that day the devil has no power over her." In one letter he has a sly dig at the Vienna musicians when he tells of having made a certain set of variations "rather difficult to play," that he may "puzzle some of the pianoforte teachers here," who, he feels sure, will occasionally be asked to play the said variations! He was often sarcastic to brother artists of a lesser order. One day he found himself in the company of Himmel, when he asked Himmel to extemporise on the piano. After Himmel had played for some time, Beethoven suddenly exclaimed: "Well, when are you going to begin in good earnest?" Himmel, who had no mean opinion of his own powers, naturally started up in a rage; but Beethoven only added to his offence by remarking to those present: "I thought Himmel had just been preluding." In revenge for this insult, Himmel shortly after played Beethoven a trick. Beethoven was always eager to have the latest news from Berlin, and Himmel took advantage of this curiosity to write to him: "The latest piece of news is the invention of a lantern for the blind." Beethoven was completely taken in by the childish joke, repeated it to his acquaintances, and wrote to Himmel to demand full particulars of the remarkable invention. The answer received was such as to bring both the correspondence and the friendship to a close. Beethoven never enjoyed a joke at his own expense.

In this respect he did not always do to others as he would have others do to him. A certain lady admirer was very anxious to have a lock of Beethoven's hair. A common friend undertook to approach the master on the subject, and the result was that Beethoven sent a tuft of hair cut from a goat's beard! The lady was overjoyed at possessing her treasure, but, unfortunately, the secret soon leaked out. Her husband wrote a letter of expostulation to Beethoven, who, conscious of his offence, at once cut off a lock of his own hair, and enclosed it in a note in which he asked the lady's forgiveness for what had occurred. Even when he was dying his sense of humour did not forsake him. When he had to be "tapped," he remarked to the doctor:

"Better water from the body than from the pen." Two days before his death, Schindler, one of his biographers, who was then with him, wrote to a friend: "He feels that his end is near, for yesterday he said to Breuning and me: 'Clap your hands, friends; the play is over.' He advances towards death with really Socratic wisdom and unexampled equanimity."

And what a weary, tragic advance it *had* been, all these years! From the time of his deafness onwards, he was constantly adding to the world's stores of the highest and best in music, and the legacy we now enjoy as the result of his genius is the most universal gift of music that has ever come from human hand and human head. The years, as they passed, brought nothing very eventful; and in December 1826 Beethoven found himself on a sick-bed, in great poverty, and unable to compose a single line. On the afternoon of March 26, 1827, he was seized with his last mortal faintness. "Thick clouds were hanging about the sky; outside, the snow lay on the ground; towards evening the wind rose; at nightfall a terrific thunderstorm burst over Vienna, and whilst the storm was still raging, the spirit of the sublime master departed." He died in his fifty-seventh year, and was buried in the cemetery of Wahring, near Vienna.

It was generally felt that a man of the most powerful character and of unique genius had been lost to the world. And yet, to the public of that day, his music was not a tithe of what it is to us now. Nay, we can say more than that, for Beethoven is one of the few creators of art whom one, ever so blessed with musical intelligence, may study for a lifetime and never exhaust. Beethoven speaks a language no composer before him had spoken, and treats of things no one had dreamt of before. Yet it seems as if he were speaking of matters long familiar in one's mother tongue—as though he touched upon emotions one had lived through in some former existence. The warmth and depth of his ethical sentiment is now felt all the world over, and it will ere long be universally recognised that he has leavened and widened the sphere of human emotions in a manner akin to that in which the conceptions of great philosophers and poets have widened the sphere of men's intellectual activity.

Beethoven might be described as the Carlyle of music. Wagner said of him that he faced the world with a defiant temperament, and kept an almost savage independence. Like Carlyle, he detested sham, and humbug, and conventionality above all things. He believed that "a man's a man for a' that," whether he be prince or plebeian, so that he be honest, and true, and good. There is a capital story of him in connection with the visit of a bumptious, ignorant brother who had amassed a fortune and purchased a fine estate. The brother had called when Beethoven was from home, and had left a card inscribed "Johann van Beethoven, Land Proprietor." This enraged the composer, who simply wrote on the other side, "Ludwig van Beethoven, Brain Proprietor," and returned the card without comment.

Of Beethoven's personal appearance we have several descriptions. Thayer, his leading biographer, says he was small and insignificant-looking, dark-complexioned, pock-marked, black-eyed, and black-haired. The hair was luxuriant, and when he walked in the wind it gave him "a truly Ossianic and demoniac appearance." His fingers were short and nearly all of the same length. One lady said his forehead was "heavenly." Another once pointed to it and exclaimed: "How beautiful, how noble, how spiritual that brow!" Beethoven was silent for a moment and then said: "Well, then, kiss this brow." Which she did. But perhaps the best description is that of Sir Julius Benedict, who met Beethoven in 1823. Sir Julius writes: "Who could ever forget those striking features? The lofty vaulted forehead, with thick grey and white hair encircling it in the most picturesque disorder; that square lion's nose, that broad chin, that noble and soft mouth. Over the cheeks, seamed with scars from the smallpox, was spread high colour. From under the bushy, closely-compressed eyebrows flashed a pair of piercing eyes. His thick-set Cyclopean figure told of a powerful frame."

But who does not know that rugged-looking figure, which reminded Weber of King Lear? Truly a noble face, with "a certain severe integrity and passionate power and lofty sadness about it, seeming in its elevation and wideness of expression to claim kindred with a world of ideas out of all proportion to our own." In the world's portraiture of great men there is nothing exactly like it.

FRANZ SCHUBERT:
THE MASTER OF THE *LIED*

> Schubert, too, wrote for silence; half his work
> Lay like a frozen Rhine till summers came
> That warmed the grass above him. Even so
> His music lives now with a mighty youth.
>
> GEORGE ELIOT.

LISZT called Schubert "the most poetical musician that ever was." Schumann was equally complimentary. He said that "Schubert's pencil was dipped in moonbeams and in the flame of the sun." Further, that "Schubert has tones for the most delicate shades of feeling, thoughts, even accidents and occurrences of life. Manifold though the passions and acts of men may be, manifold is Schubert's music. That which his eye sees, his hand touches, becomes transformed to music." These tributes are the more significant that musicians are so seldom complimentary to each other.

The tributes are not exaggerated either. And that makes us think the more how pitiful it is that Schubert, like Mozart, should have such a pathetic biography. "My music," he once said, "is the product of my genius and my poverty, and that which I have written in my greatest distress is what the world seems to like the best." Alas! that is too often the case. As the poet has said, "the anguish of the singer makes the beauty of the strain." No doubt if Schubert had ordered his life more regularly, if he had not been the incorrigible Bohemian that he was, he would have fared better in every way. But in that case we might not have had all that glorious music from him.

It is not without meaning that he is put into this book after Beethoven. When Schubert was in his teens, he sighed and said: "Who can do anything after Beethoven?" Beethoven is usually spoken of as Schubert's contemporary, but he was Schubert's senior by twenty-seven years. Beethoven had achieved fame before Schubert began to compose at all. It would have been no wonder, then, if a mere lad, however gifted, had felt somewhat despairing, especially as he lived in the same town with the great master, and was always hearing his praises sounded. But to Schubert Beethoven really acted as a stimulus. A sight of him at a concert seems to have made a great and lasting impression on the younger man, who not long after dedicated a set of pianoforte variations to his hero. It is said that, shy as he was, he took this piece to Beethoven's lodgings, hoping for an interview, but whether he saw Beethoven at that time is uncertain. We know at any rate that during Beethoven's last illness a collection of Schubert's songs was placed in his hands, and that Beethoven, after examining them, exclaimed: "Truly, Schubert possesses the divine fire. Some day he will make a noise in the world." When Beethoven's death was just at hand, Schubert stood with others for a long while round his bed. The invalid was told the names of his visitors, and made feeble signs to them with his hands. Of Schubert he said: "Franz has my soul." At this Schubert left the room overcome with emotion, for his veneration of Beethoven amounted to something like worship. Then, at the funeral, Schubert was one of the thirty-eight torchbearers who stood around the grave. After the interment, he adjourned with friends to a tavern, where he filled two glasses of wine, drinking the first to the memory of Beethoven, and the second to the memory of him who should soonest follow Beethoven to the grave. "Heaven from all creatures hides the book of Fate," says the poet. It was to the departure of his own spirit, little as he can have suspected it, that Schubert thus drank, for in less than two years he was laid in that same cemetery with Beethoven, the two separated by only three graves.

It is almost superfluous to say that Franz Schubert came of a lowly stock, for genius seldom flowers in high places. His grandfather was a Moravian peasant, and his father was an assistant in a village school when he married at nineteen. He married a cook, as the fathers of Haydn and Beethoven had done. There were fourteen children of the marriage, but nine of them died, leaving four sons and one daughter. The sons all became teachers, like their father, and the daughter married a teacher.

Franz Schubert, the fourth son who survived, was born on January 31, 1797. His father was then parish schoolmaster at Lichtenthal, a suburb of Vienna. He was a poor man, and could give his boy nothing more than a good education. "When Franz was five years old," he wrote, "I prepared him for elementary instruction, and at six I sent him to school. He was always the first among his fellow-students." Franz showed the ruling passion very early, and his father was able to help him here too. He ground him in the elements of music and taught him the violin so well that at eight he could take his part in easy duets.

But Franz Schubert was one of those rare and lucky individuals who seem to attain without any effort what costs others much toil and trouble. No instructor could keep pace with him. Holzer, the parish choirmaster, to whom he was sent for singing lessons, declared many times, with tears in his eyes, that he never before had such a pupil. When he prepared to teach him anything, he found that he had already mastered it. "He has harmony in his little finger," he said. "I cannot claim to have given him any lessons. I simply talked with him and looked at him in silent amazement." One of his brothers started to teach him the piano, and was himself outstripped within a month. All the same, Schubert was never a good pianist, any more than Wagner. His short, stubby fingers were not made for great dexterity on the keyboard. He once attempted to play his own Fantaisie (Op. 15) to some friends. After breaking down twice, he jumped from the piano in a towering rage, exclaiming: "The devil himself couldn't play such stuff." When he did play, however, he played with wonderful expression—made the piano sing like a bird, as some one said.

There could be only one future for such a boy. He had a lovely treble voice, and so gained an easy entry into the parish church choir, where, at the age of eleven, he was both solo singer and solo violin. Then, in 1808, his father got him a place in the choir school of the Imperial Chapel, where he received a general as well as a musical education. The other boy candidates, seeing the fat, awkward little fellow, in his light-grey homespun suit, took him for a miller's son and made fun of him. But they repented of their impertinence when the examiners called him up, and his clear pure voice rang out in the well-known tunes.

Schubert's musical opportunities were now immensely improved. There was a small orchestra in the choir school, and by its performances he gradually became acquainted with the works of the great masters. At the very first practice he attracted the notice of the leader, Von Spaun. Spaun heard behind him a violin being played with unusual distinction, and on turning round saw a little chap in spectacles. The two had a talk at the end of the rehearsal. "I sometimes compose music, but I cannot afford to buy paper; do you think you could help me?" said Schubert to Spaun. Spaun brought him some paper next day, and promised him more. He little thought what he was letting himself in for. At this time, and indeed all through his brief career, Schubert's consumption of music paper was something perfectly phenomenal.

Just now he badly needed other things besides music paper. A boys' school was not a paradise in those days, even if the uniform *was* decorated with gold lace. The youths were poorly fed, and Schubert had a hearty appetite, with no money to supplement the school fare. It is pathetically amusing to read his plaints. Look, for instance, at the following letter to his brother Ferdinand: "You know by experience that a fellow would like at times a roll and an apple or two, especially if, after a frugal dinner, he has to wait for a meagre supper for eight hours and a half. The few groschen that I receive from my father are always gone to the devil the first day, and what am I to do afterwards? 'Those who hope will not be confounded,' says the Bible, and I firmly believe it. Suppose, for instance, you send me a couple of kreutzer a month; I don't think you would notice the difference in your own purse, and I should live quite content and happy in my cloister. St. Matthew says also that, 'Whosoever hath two coats shall give one to the poor.' In the meantime I trust you will lend your ear to the voice crying to you incessantly to remember your poor brother Franz, who loves and confides in you." Let us hope that Ferdinand, who was a good fellow, gave him what he asked for.

If Schubert was suffering physical hunger, he was at least getting his musical hunger fairly appeased. Very soon the school concert programmes were being made up almost entirely of his works. Recitals of his music were frequently given in his home, too, for brothers and father all played. His ear was quick to detect an error, and he would say, with a modest smile: "Herr Vater, you must be making a mistake there." He was sent for harmony lessons to a musician named Ruczizka. But here again the old story was repeated. Ruczizka soon discovered that his pupil knew more than himself. "God has been his teacher," he said. Then he went to Salieri, an Italian musician who conducted the Imperial choir. Salieri had been intimate with Mozart, and was falsely accused of poisoning him. Schubert continued his lessons with Salieri for a long time. But Salieri, too, was astounded at his natural cleverness. "Schubert can do everything," he exclaimed. "He is a genius. He composes songs, masses, operas, string quartets, in fact anything you like." And so he did.

At the choir school he neglected his general education altogether in favour of music. His voice broke in 1813, and then, refusing an offer of further instruction in the higher branches of learning, he left the school, and faced the world, a youth of sixteen, with an income to make for himself. Music was not to be thought of as a profession just yet, for Schubert wanted to be a composer, and publishers would not pay for works by an untried hand. So Schubert went back to his father's house and became his father's assistant—another Schubert schoolmaster. Perhaps in taking this course he desired to escape service in the army, from which the teaching profession was exempt. In any case, three years of school work sufficed for

Schubert. He performed his duties regularly and conscientiously, but the drudgery was unspeakably irksome to him. He was a nervous, irritable teacher, and dull or obstinate children suffered severely at his hands. Even for teaching music he was not suited by either temperament or training, but at least he did not break up the chairs as Beethoven did, or, like Chopin, when things went wrong, start up and ask if a dog had been barking.

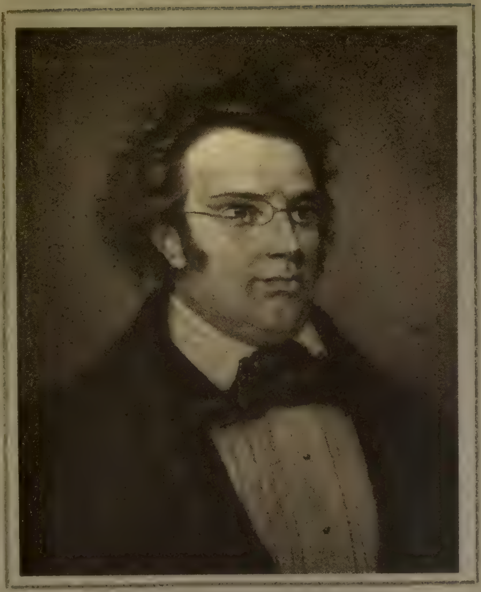
Circumstances like those we have been considering would not seem highly favourable for the fertilising of musical inspiration. But it is a fact that as a composer Schubert was as prolific when he was toiling away in his father's school as at any period of his life. It was then that he wrote some of his finest songs, and there were also dramatic works, masses, symphonies, and miscellaneous pieces in sufficient number to have served as the life work of any ordinary artist. It was now that he composed the song which first made his name famous—the "Erl King." Schubert had a perfect passion for German poetry, and set Schiller and Goethe with a prodigality truly marvellous. Somebody once said of him that if he had lived longer he would have set the whole of German literature to music.

The story of the "Erl King" is worth telling. Seated one afternoon in his little room, Schubert found himself deep in the study of a volume of Goethe. He came to the "Erl King," and as he read, every line of the words seemed to flow into strange unearthly music. The rushing sound of the wind and the terrors of the enchanted forest were instantly changed for him into realities, and seizing a pen he dashed down the song, as we have it now, in less time than an expert would take to make a "fair" copy of it. And here is as fitting a place as any other to say that Schubert was prodigiously quick at composition. Handel, Bach, Mozart, and Haydn wrote with extreme rapidity, but nothing like Schubert. His ideas flowed faster than he could set them down. He had to read a poem only once or twice and its appropriate musical expression came to him without further effort. The biographers cite his record for 1815 in illustration. That year he wrote half a dozen dramatic works, two masses, two symphonies, a quantity of church and chamber music, and nearly 150 songs. In one day alone he composed seven songs. Think of the mere labour of transferring all that to music paper. No wonder Schubert sometimes failed to recognise his own work. There is a story about a vocalist who once tried over a Schubert song in the composer's presence. "H'm! pretty good song; who wrote it?" he asked. And he wrote anywhere, too. Thus, he wrote his beautiful morning song, "Hark! hark! the lark," on the back of a bill of fare, amid all the stir and clatter of a Viennese outdoor restaurant.

The "Erl King" was sung for the first time in public in February 1819. Schubert had been trying to get a publisher for it, but the publishers would not look at it. The accompaniment was too difficult, they said, and the composer was almost unknown. At length the song was printed by subscription and published on commission. A hundred copies were subscribed for beforehand, and in nine months 800 copies were sold.

This success proved the "entering wedge" for Schubert. Publishers now began to have some faith in the composer. He went on writing, and several of his songs sold well. Had he been wise, he might now have laid in a little fortune for himself. But he foolishly parted with his compositions for the most trivial sums. He gave one publisher over seventy songs, including "The Wanderer," for 800 florins, and the firm, between 1822 and 1861, realised over 2700 florins from "The Wanderer" alone. Some of the glorious songs in the "Winterreise," composed in 1826, were actually thrown away for less than a shilling apiece. In 1828 he got only thirty florins for a piano quintet, and only twenty-one florins for his splendid Trio in E flat.

There is a well-known anecdote bearing on this Mozart-like helplessness and carelessness in business matters. One of Schubert's boon companions was Franz Lachner, afterwards music director at the Court of Munich. Lachner took advantage of a fine summer morning to ask Schubert to join a party of friends who were going to make a trip into the country. Schubert wished very much to accept, but having no money, had to refuse. Lachner being also hard up, it made the case very embarrassing. So Schubert gave Lachner a portfolio of manuscript songs, asking him to sell them; for, he added, he had been so often to the pub-



SCHUBERT

lisher that he dared not go again. The publisher proved very angry, exclaiming, "More of Schubert's stuff!" and stating very seriously that no one would buy Schubert's songs. Finally, however, he gave way, and bought all the manuscripts for five florins! Very happy, the two friends went on their trip, and finding a spinet at the inn at which they stopped, Schubert improvised some more songs, of which he received the inspiration on the road. This was Franz Schubert all over.

But we must get back to our narrative. We are to consider Schubert liberated from school drudgery. This he owed directly to a young Swede of some means, Franz von Schober, who invited Schubert to come and live with him, and pursue his art freely and uninterruptedly. Schober was the best and most useful patron he ever had. How happy he felt himself now may be gathered from a letter he addressed to his brother Ignaz, who was chafing under his toils as a teacher. Ignaz wrote in reply: "You fortunate man! How you are to be envied! You live in a sweet golden freedom; can give your musical genius free rein, can express your thoughts as you please; are loved, admired, idolized, while the rest of us are devoted, like so many wretched beasts of burden, to all the brutalities of a pack of wild youth, and, moreover, must be subservient to a thankless public, and under the thumb of a stupid priest."

Schober was able to introduce Schubert to several influential artists, who were likely to be of use to him in bringing his compositions before the world. Most notable among them was the baritone singer Vogl, who did much to popularise his *lieder*. Another helpful friend was the poet Mayrhofer, who wrote the words of several of his songs. Mayrhofer and Schubert lived together for two years, and it is the poet (who, by the way, became insane, and committed suicide) who tells us *how* they lived. "It was in a gloomy street. House and room had suffered from the tooth of time; the roof was somewhat sunken, the light cut off by a great building opposite; a played-out piano, a small bookcase—such was the room which, with the hours we spent there, can never pass from my memory."

Schubert was quite happy, even under these seemingly uncongenial conditions. Still, he was not making money; so when, in 1818, he was offered the post of music-master in the house of Count John Esterhazy, of the family whom Haydn had served, he eagerly accepted it. This meant a winter home in Vienna and a summer home in Hungary. But Schubert was a town man, and he liked being away from Vienna as little as Dr. Johnson liked being away from Fleet Street. However, he found compensations even in the country. Thus he writes of the household in which he is engaged: "The cook is rather jolly; the ladies'-maid is thirty; the housemaid very pretty, often quite social; the nurse a good old soul; the butler my rival. The Count is rather rough; the Countess haughty, yet with a kind heart; the Countesses nice girls." The Countesses were his young pupils. It is said that he cherished a hidden passion for the youngest, Caroline, a girl of eleven when he first knew her.

Schubert was never a ladies' man, and this is the only affair of the heart in which he was concerned. It is rather curious, considering that he had the poetic and imaginative qualities so profusely developed. But then he was so awkward and so shy; and, besides that, he was not personally attractive. His leading biographer says he was under the average height, round-backed and round-shouldered, with plump arms and hands. He had a round and puffy face, low forehead, thick lips, bushy eyebrows, and a short, turned-up nose. His eyes were fine, but they were hidden by spectacles, which he wore even in bed. What hope could such a man have of winning fair lady, and a Countess, too, no less? Of course Caroline Esterhazy could not marry a poor musician in any case. But it is clear that, as she grew up, she came to realise something of Schubert's feelings toward her. She once asked him why he did not dedicate one of his compositions to her. "What would be the use?" he said. "All that I do is dedicated to you." The old flame kept burning in his heart to the last, but Caroline Esterhazy soon forgot.

Schubert's connection with the Esterhazys continued intermittently for several years. His material needs were fairly satisfied; but his professional prospects somehow refused to brighten. True, his songs were making an impression; but he wanted to do bigger things—operas, and symphonies, and the like—and mercenary managers and publishers would venture nothing unless assured of a substantial profit. Naturally jovial and optimistic, Schubert was not easily cast down, but ill-luck, combined with a monotonous existence, at length weighed on his spirits and hurt his health. "I feel myself the most unhappy, the most miserable man on earth," he writes; "a man whose most brilliant hopes have come to nothing; whose enthusiasm for the beautiful threatens to vanish altogether." He declares that he goes to sleep every night, hoping never to waken again. In one letter he says: "Picture to yourself a man whose health can never be re-established, who from sheer despair makes matters worse instead of better; picture to yourself, I say, a man whose most brilliant hopes have come to nothing, to whom the happiness of proffered love and friendship is but anguish, whose enthusiasm for the beautiful (an inspired feeling at least) threatens to vanish altogether, and then ask yourself if such a condition does not represent a miserable and unhappy man?" Beethoven used to write like that, too, but though his condition was more pitiable, he bore his misfortunes with more dignity. He still retained faith in his art, and that sustained him.

Nothing occurred for a time to mark the course of Schubert's life beyond the appearance of fresh compositions. He made applications for several fixed appointments, but was always defeated. Even if he had been successful, it is doubtful if his inherent love of change, his independent spirit, and his free untutored manner would have allowed him to keep a routine post for any length of time. In any case, it mattered little now, for the end was approaching. The old experience was about to be repeated. Publishers were becoming more pleasant and encouraging, and money was coming in a little more freely. But it was too late.

In 1827 Beethoven died, and we have seen what was Schubert's part in that connection. One evening in the October of 1828, when supping with some friends at a tavern, he suddenly threw down his knife and fork, protesting that the food tasted like poison. His nerves had become overstrained, the constitution was undermined. They got him home, and he took to his bed, feeling, as he said, no actual pain, but great weakness and depression. Shortly after, he wrote to his kind friend Schober: "I am ill. I have neither eaten nor drunk anything for eleven days, and shift, weak and weary, from my chair to my bed and back again." This could not last. The illness assumed a graver form, and there was a consultation of doctors. "What is going to happen to me?" he plaintively asked his brother Ferdinand. Delirium set in. He imagined that Beethoven was in the room; then he imagined that his quarters were changed, and he was miserable because Beethoven was not there. Then, temporarily recovering his senses, he turned to the doctor and said, slowly and earnestly, "Here is my end." With that he shifted in bed, turning his face to the wall. And so, on the 19th of November 1828, this greatest of lyric geniuses went out into the Eternal Silence, dead at the early age of thirty-one.

What followed is almost too sad to tell. It is calculated that Schubert had never made more than £100 a year. At any rate, he died leaving not enough to pay the expenses of his funeral. His father and the rest of the family were poor enough too. It cost seventy florins to remove the body to Wahring cemetery—"a large sum, a very large sum," said brother Ferdinand, "but very little for the honour of Franz's resting-place." Yes, the honour! But the official inventory of poor Schubert's possessions may be quoted as showing how Vienna and the world had repaid him for his priceless creations. Here it is: Three dress coats, three walking coats, ten pairs of trousers, nine waistcoats, one hat, five pairs of shoes, three pairs of boots, four shirts, nine neckties and pocket handkerchiefs, thirteen pairs of socks, one towel, one sheet, two bed cases, one mattress, one bolster, one quilt. At the end of the inventory was put "a quantity of old music"—and the total value was set down at fifty shillings.

It is suggestive, as Mr. Joseph Bennett has said, to contrast this beggarly account with the honours since laid upon Schubert's tomb and hung around his memory. Looking at the large space now filled in the world by the man who died worth only fifty shillings, and with a fame that scarcely extended beyond Vienna, we see how small and insignificant a part of the real life of genius is that which we call life. And the moral of the whole is this:

> We live in deeds, not years, in thoughts, not breaths,
> In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
> We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives
> Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best!

Over Schubert's grave are inscribed the words: "Here lies buried a rich treasure, but still fairer hopes' —a sentiment only half true. As Schumann said, it was enough to make the first declaration without adding the second. For some reason or other Schubert's remains were afterwards disturbed, the Musical Society having obtained permission to take up the bones of both masters—Schubert and Beethoven—to measure them, and phrenologists were called in to feel the bumps. The remains were afterwards with all honour carried through the streets of Vienna in pompous procession —that poor man who could not afford 8d. to buy a dinner when he was alive—and buried with those of Beethoven and quite a constellation of great masters in the Central Cemetery.

Franz Schubert was the most lovable of men, and made heaps of friends in his own class. To outsiders his manner was shy and retiring, awkward almost to clownishness. He did not invite notice, and he received little. In reply to a lady's apology for neglect on one occasion, he said: "It is nothing, madame, I am used to it." However unattractive his exterior may have been, the spiritual and hidden part of the man was nobly and abundantly endowed. There was in him a total absence of jealousy; he had a sweet temper, was high-minded, and an enthusiastic worshipper of nature and the art which was sacred to him. He had something of the boyishness of Mozart, and indulged in many juvenile buffooneries. For instance, he would often "sing" the "Erl King" through a fine-toothed comb. There is a general impression that he drank to excess, but the world is too prone to exaggerate a failing of that kind. That Schubert was devoted to the beer jug there is no use denying. But he could never be called a drunkard. The weakness was entirely the result of his liking for genial society; and it cannot have been so pronounced after all, otherwise he could never, in his short life, have produced the enormous number of compositions that he did.

Assuming that he began writing when he was sixteen or seventeen, while he died at thirty-one: during that time he filled what now, in his complete published works, make up forty-one folio volumes, including the extraordinary total of 605 songs. He wrote songs by the sheaf, as one would gather corn in harvest. But he spread himself over the whole range of his art—operas, cantatas, masses, symphonies, quartets, chamber music of all kinds. Verily, as Schumann said, "he has done enough." He is, beyond all question, the most fertile and original melodist that ever lived, and he is the first of the great song-writers in rank as well as in time. The German folk-song found in him its highest and finest ennoblement; through him, the genuine German native singer, came the ancient folk-song into life again, purified and transfigured by art.

ROBERT SCHUMANN: COMPOSER, EDITOR, AND ESSAYIST

> Endeavour to play easy pieces well and beautifully; that is better than to play difficult pieces indifferently well. When you play, never mind who listens to you. Play always as if in the presence of a master.—SCHUMANN.

THE year 1809 has been called a wonderful birth year. And so it was, for it gave us Tennyson and Mendelssohn and Darwin and Edgar Allan Poe and Oliver Wendell Holmes and Mrs. Browning and Gladstone and Abraham Lincoln. But the years 1810 and 1811 were not less remarkable, in the history of music at least. During that period, Chopin, Liszt, Heller, Thalberg, and Henselt were all born. And Robert Alexander Schumann, with very good judgment, made himself one of the distinguished company by coming into the world on the 8th of June 1810.

The birthplace was Zwickau, a quaint little town in Saxony, with tall, picturesque houses, and broad, grass-grown streets. The father was a bookseller and publisher there. He was, by the composer's description, "a very active and intelligent man, noted for his pocket edition of foreign classics; for many important business works; and for a translation of several of Byron's poems, published shortly before his death." He educated his boy, as the boy himself puts it, "lovingly and carefully." But unfortunately he and the mother—the mother especially—had set their hearts on making a lawyer of him. Thus, though Schumann early showed a love for music, his studies were checked not only by lack of home sympathy, but by actual hindrance. Music was regarded by these people as "a precarious living." Schumann had a very tender regard for his mother, and the knowledge that the exercise of his musical talent to any serious purpose was against her wish proved the reverse of inspiring. Moreover, such law studies as he undertook bent his mind somewhat into the groove which studies of that kind create. He could not be wholly uninfluenced by their narrowing effect, and much as he hated them, they contributed to the suppression of his emotional capabilities. This much he realised himself when he wrote that the law turns its devotee "into gristle and freezes him into ice, so that no follower of fancy will any longer yearn for the springtime of the world."

It was in pursuance of bookseller Schumann's idea that the future composer was sent in 1828 to study law at Leipzig University. The intention was that he should later complete his course at Heidelberg. But before this could be fully carried out, the bookseller died, and the embryo lawyer, who had been scribbling music more or less from his twelfth year, began to take to it more seriously. Like Wagner, he had shown a strong tendency towards literature, and wrote blood and thunder plays, which were produced by his chums under his direction. He wrote poems, too, some of which he subsequently set to music. Further, when only fourteen, he helped his father to prepare a "Picture Gallery of the most Famous Men of all Nations and Times." In all this we already see the future editor, essayist, and letter-writer; for Schumann was all that, in addition to being a composer.

At any rate, he would have nothing more to do with the law, with "chilling jurisprudence" and its "ice-cold definitions." That was his final decision, arrived at while he was still in Leipzig. He hated Leipzig. "Leipzig is a horrid hole, where one cannot enjoy life," he said. "It is far easier to make progress in the art of spending money than in the lecture-rooms." Apparently money was scarce with him about this time, though later on he fell heir to a modest competency, which relieved him from total dependence on his earnings by music. "For two weeks I have not had a shilling," he wrote one November day to his mother. "I owe Wieck 20 thalers, and Lühe 30, and I am actually living like a dog." His hair was "a yard long," yet he could not afford to have it cut. For a fortnight he had been obliged to wear white cravats, his black ones were so shabby. His piano is unbearably out of tune. He cannot even shoot himself, because he has no money to buy pistols.

The reference to Wieck is a trifle "previous." Schumann had just abandoned the law when he fell in with Heinrich Dorn and with Friedrich Wieck. The first, who was conductor of the opera and a notable figure in musical Leipzig, he immortalised by studying composition with him ; and the second he honoured, as we shall see, by marrying his daughter Clara. Wieck was the leading piano professor in Leipzig, and Schumann had now determined upon being a virtuoso of the keyboard. Even when pretending to study law, he would often practise the piano for seven hours a day. Now he placed himself under Wieck's tuition. Unluckily, the obstinate stiffness of that third finger which gives trouble to all pianists, set Schumann unloosening and developing the sinews by a mechanical invention of his own. The contrivance was simple enough—a cord through a pulley fastened to the ceiling of his room. By this means he could draw back his finger at will, and prevent it moving while the other fingers played. As Ambros remarks, the device was a good illustration of the saying that a man is liable to break his neck if he jumps through a window in order to get down quicker than by the stairway. It was not only unsuccessful : it caused permanent injury to the hand, so that in the end Schumann had to abandon altogether the idea of being a great pianist.

The disappointment arising from this unexpected shattering of his ambitions must have been intense. But we, who know the after history, know that music gained in a higher walk what it lost in a lower. The player leaves behind him, after all, little more than a memory amongst those who may have heard him ;

the great composer is remembered not alone by the age in which he writes but by all time. Still, one cannot help sympathising with Schumann in his discomfiture. Nor was it the only thing that seriously disturbed him about this date. He had fallen passionately in love with Clara Wieck, "one of the most glorious girls the world has ever seen" (so, in his rapture, he described her); but Clara's father, while willing to retain him as a pupil, would not hear of him for a son-in-law. He had higher ambitions for his prodigy daughter. Imagine the prosaic fellow writing thus to Schumann: "I don't quite know what I mean to do with Clara, but,—hearts! what do I care about hearts?" Aye, but hearts have a way of asserting themselves!

Clara Wieck had already, as a child of ten, made a sensation as a pianist, and we can readily understand how Schumann would be drawn to her while he was himself hopeful of posing as a player. In the Autobiography of Moscheles there are frequent references to meetings with Schumann at the house of the Wiecks, and Clara's playing is spoken of as "superb, and void of all affectation." It was lucky for Schumann that Clara Wieck was as much in love with him as he was with her. In the meantime they resolved to wait, hoping that old Wieck would relent. He did not relent. At first Schumann took it philosophically, remarking that the delay had at least this advantage, that they would gain a better knowledge of each other—a knowledge that to most people usually came after marriage.

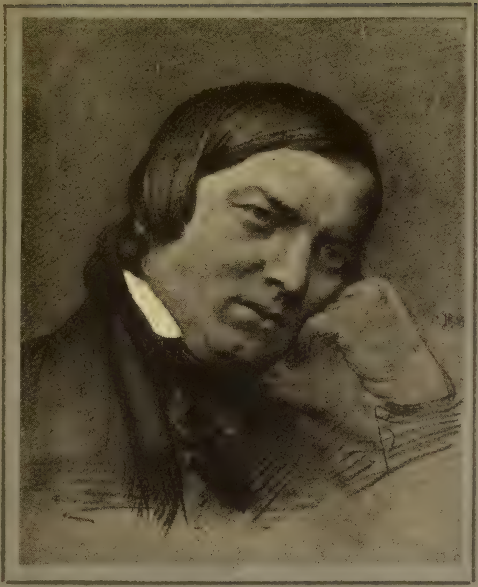
Two years went by, and Wieck still remained unyielding. Then, as a last resource, Schumann called in the aid of the law; for in Germany, if a father refuses to let his daughter marry, he can be forced to say why. The case dragged on for a whole year, but at length the courts decided that Wieck's objections were trivial, and the marriage took place in September 1840, when the bride was twenty-one and the bridegroom thirty. Schumann felt perfectly justified in the step he had taken. "We are young," he wrote; "we have our fingers, power, reputation. I have, moreover, a modest property, which brings me 300 thalers a year; the profits of the *Journal* are almost as much, and my compositions are well paid for." Happy man among great composers, to be able to begin married life under such rosy auspices!

Robert Schumann and Clara Wieck are not only the ideal lovers of musical history, but their story is worthy of a high place in the love literature of the world. There is nothing more earnest and noble, from Héloise and Abelard to Paul and Virginia. A more satisfactory union has seldom been recorded. During the courtship, Schumann told his *fiancée* that "we will lead a life of poetry and blossom, and we will play and compose together like angels, and bring gladness to mankind." That was pretty much what they did —until the shadow fell. Schumann said to Mendelssohn that his wife was "a gift from heaven." And such she proved herself. The loftiness of her character was never more clearly shown than when she took up the burden of life after the great tragedy which sent her husband with clouded mind into confinement, leaving her with the cares of a young family. While they were together they lived for one another, and for their children, of whom there were eight in all. He created and wrote for his wife and in accordance with her temperament, while she looked upon it as her highest privilege to give to the world the most perfect interpretation of his works for the piano. She had a long widowhood of forty years, and during all that time she devoted herself to the popularising of her husband's works.

To return from this anticipation of events. Disappointed in his hopes of becoming a great pianist, Schumann took to composition as a congenial alternative. During the courtship period his imaginative mind received many happy inspirations, which found an outlet mostly in vocal pieces. In the year of his marriage alone, he wrote no fewer than 130 songs, some of them the finest things he ever did in that line. Larger works, such as symphonies and concertos, he also tried at this time; but only the lesser works of the period for piano have survived. It was but natural that his first successes should be for the instrument which he knew best. As a matter of fact, his sympathy for the piano continued to the end, and much of his best music is in the form of highly imaginative pieces for it. Most of them belong to the same order as Mendelssohn's "Songs without Words," but they are far more characteristic and original, and more poetical and romantic. The standard of his ideas was so high, and his treatment of the instrument so rich in colour, that he raised this branch of art to a point which it had never attained before, and left a mass of genuine lyrics, the most enduring and enjoyable of all the thousands of such works which the nineteenth century produced.

Early in his career as a composer, Schumann was drawn into literary work on behalf of music. Musicians are seldom good writers, but Schumann, like Wagner and Berlioz, was a brilliant exception. In fact we must regard him always in the double character of composer and writer. He had been much impressed with the lowness of public taste in music, as well as by the badness of musical criticism ; and with the view of remedying matters he started the *New Journal of Music*, which came to be mainly instrumental in bringing into notice Chopin, Berlioz, Weber, Brahms, Henselt, and other rising musicians of the time. As editor of this publication, which by the way still lives, Schumann exercised a very powerful influence, and established himself as a keen and incisive thinker and a master of literary style.

Editing a journal is hard work under any circumstances, but it is doubly hard when a man's whole soul and most of his time are given to it. Schumann was in this position during all the ten years of his editorship, with the consequence that he composed very little. Indeed he was so absorbed in his writing that Mendelssohn is declared to have scarcely thought of him as a composer at all, but only as a literary man. By and by, however, a flood of works for the piano came forth



SCHUMANN

many of them among his finest compositions—such as the great Fantasia in C, the *Humoreske*, *Novelletten*, *Fantasiestücke*, and other pieces. Immediately after this he took to symphony writing, and in one year produced three of his most important works in that department, notably the Symphony in B flat which he wrote with a pen he had found lying on Beethoven's grave. It was his fancy to imagine that the pen had been accidentally dropped by Schubert. Then he took up chamber music, and wrote the famous Quintet for piano and strings and the Quartet for a similar combination, both of which have gained an enviable popularity. Afterwards he struck out in yet another line, and tried choral composition. Taking Moore's "Lallah Rookh" as the basis of his text, he produced a delightful cantata, *Paradise and the Peri*, which is not so well known as it should be.

It was about this time that his health began to give way. He had overtaxed his strength; for besides composition and literary work he had been acting as Mendelssohn's coadjutor in the new Conservatorium at Leipzig. His professorship here greatly worried him, for, like most geniuses, he had no aptitude for teaching, and the continual listening to music indifferently performed worked on his nerves. The trouble began to manifest itself rather seriously in loss of musical memory, sleeplessness, and strange, uncanny imaginings. "Everything affects and exhausts me," he said. There was a vein of hypochondria in his family, and a sister had died at twenty of an incurable melancholy.

He moved to Dresden for quiet, but the quiet only made his habits of silence and abstraction more pronounced, and his health never fully returned. He got a little better about 1846, and began to compose again with something of his old ardour. The great Symphony in C, and the famous Concerto for piano both belong to this period, and the opera of *Genoveva* followed somewhat later. The stay at Dresden (where he met Wagner) continued until 1849, when political disturbances necessitated a removal. Presently we find him in Düsseldorf as conductor of an important orchestra. But this post proved equally intractable with the Leipzig professorship. Schumann was too shy, if not too morose, to make a satisfactory conductor. At rehearsals he often praised when he should have blamed ; and if mistakes happened after repeated trials, he simply got angry without explaining the cause of his temper.

Although a faithful friend, Schumann was eminently unsociable, and his reserve became more and more marked as the years went on. He knew this himself. Once when an old acquaintance wrote that he meant to call on him, Schumann answered : "I shall be delighted to see you, but there is not much to be had from me. I hardly speak at all—in the evening more, and most at the piano." He once asked another friend to go with him for lunch to a restaurant in the suburbs, and during the walk there and back, about a mile each way, the only remark he made was about the fine weather. Henriette Voigt, an amateur friend, tells how, after she and the composer had been enjoying music together one lovely evening, they went out in a boat. And there they sat, side by side, for over an hour, without either speaking a word. When they parted, Schumann said, with a pressure of the hand that betokened his feelings: "To-dav we have perfectly understood one another." Still another incident in illustration is reported by Dr. Hanslick, who writes: "Wagner expressed himself thus to me in 1846: Schumann is a highly gifted musician but an impossible man. When I came from Paris I went to see him. I related my Parisian experiences, spoke of the state of music in France, then of that in Germany; spoke of literature and politics, but he remained as good as dumb for over an hour. One cannot go on talking quite alone." It is only fair, however, to give Schumann's version of the same interview: "I have seldom met Wagner, but he is a man of education and spirit; he talks, however, unceasingly, and that one cannot endure for very long together." In other words, Wagner talked so incessantly as to give Schumann no chance of speaking.

Meanwhile, there were ominous signs of returning mental disturbance. At Düsseldorf things became so unsatisfactory that Schumann's engagement was terminated, and in a way that left a painful impression on his mind. A concert tour in Holland, which he undertook with his wife, brought back some of the old pleasure in life, but hallucinations of a strange kind continued to haunt him at intervals to such an extent that he even wished to be taken to an asylum. He was afraid to live above the ground floor, or to go to a height in any building, in case he might suddenly be tempted to throw himself down.

In 1853 the darkness further deepened. "He began to attend spiritualistic séances, and imagined that Beethoven was trying to communicate with him by four knocks on the table. He fancied himself haunted by Schubert, who begged him to finish the 'Unfinished Symphony'; he imagined that the note 'A' was always sounding in his ears, and gradually whole compositions seemed to grow above this continual organ point." Curiously enough, it was this same delusion about hearing a single note that drove the Bohemian composer Smetana mad, after making the note the foundation of one of his compositions. Schumann thought that spirits brought him musical themes; and in February 1854 he wrote down one of these themes, which Brahms afterwards "set" as piano variations, ending with a funeral march. Then came one of those dreadful lucid intervals, in which he realised that he was going crazy. His malady became more and more serious, and during a severe attack he tried to commit suicide by throwing himself into the Rhine. He was rescued just in time by some passing boatmen, but the shock was too severe, and he had to be placed in a private asylum at Endenich, near Bonn.

He made occasional improvements, and was able to see friends and enjoy their company. Sad to say, however, his wife was forbidden to visit him, for it seemed to excite his emotions too greatly to see her.

Yet it was in the arms of that noble, loving wife that he breathed his last, after two mournful years of seclusion, on the 29th of July 1856. He was buried at Bonn, the birthplace of Beethoven, and over his grave stands a superb monument, subscribed for by a wide circle of friends and admirers. His old intimate, Ferdinand Hiller, inconsolable for his loss, wrote a panegyric which may fittingly be transcribed:

> Thou didst rule with a golden sceptre over a splendid world of tones, and thou didst work therein with power and freedom. And many of the best gathered round thee, intrusted themselves to thee, inspired thee with their inspiration, and rewarded thee with their deep affection. And what a love adorned thy life! A wife, gifted with a radiant crown of genius, stood at thy side, and thou wert to her as the father to daughter, as bridegroom to bride, and as master to disciple, and as saint to the elect. And when she could not be with thee and remove every stone from before thy feet, then didst thou feel, in the midst of dreams and sorrows, her protecting hand from the distance; and when the Angel of Death had pity on thee, and drew nigh to thy anguished soul, in order to help it again toward light and freedom, in thy last hours thy glance met hers; and reading the love in her eyes, thy weary spirit fled.

It is said that Schumann's mental disease was chiefly attributable to the formation of bony masses in the brain. There is an affecting story of Brahms going to see him at Endenich, when he heard him ask for a Bible. The physicians refused his request, choosing to read it as a convincing evidence of brain trouble! "Those fellows," said Brahms, "did not know that we North Germans want the Bible every day, and never let a day pass without it."

Schumann's personal appearance is familiar through his portraits. One of his biographers gives this description of him towards the close of his life:

> Robert Schumann was of middling stature, almost tall, and slightly corpulent. His bearing, while in health, was haughty, distinguished, dignified, and calm; his gait slow, soft, and a little slovenly. He often paced the room on tiptoe, apparently without cause. His eyes were generally downcast, half-closed, and only brightened in intercourse with intimate friends, but then most pleasantly. His countenance produced an agreeable, kindly impression; it was without regular beauty, and not particularly intellectual. The fine-cut mouth, usually puckered as if to whistle, was, next to the eyes, the most attractive feature of his round, full, ruddy face. Above the heavy nose rose a high, bold, arched brow, which broadened visibly at the temples. His head, covered with long, thick, dark-brown hair, was firm, and intensely powerful—one might say square.

This is not very flattering, to say the least. Sir Sterndale Bennett, who had met him in Leipzig, was more amusing, if less particular as to detail, when he wrote:

> Herr Schumann is a first-rate man,
> He smokes as ne'er another can;
> A man of thirty, I suppose,
> Short is his hair, and short his nose.

As a man, Schumann was kind-hearted and generous and devoid of all professional jealousy. It was only his fits of excessive depression and gloomy foreboding, his reserve and his extreme irritability—all born of the brain trouble—that prevented him from making friends more readily than he did. He once wrote to Clara Wieck: "I am often very leathery, dry, and disagreeable, and laugh much inwardly." And again: "Inwardly I acknowledge the most trifling favour, understand every hint, every subtle trait in another's heart, and yet I so often blunder in what I say and do." One of the best features in his character was his fondness for young people, as indeed his famous *Album for the Young* would suggest. There is a pretty story of a little piece of funning he practised on his own children when, meeting them one day on the street, he pretended not to know who they were. Whatever his outward manner, his heart was in the right place.

It is only within comparatively recent years that Schumann has attained anything like world-wide recognition. He said of his own time that if he had not made himself feared as an editor he would never have got his works published. They were considered "dry, eccentric, heavy, out of rule." We look upon them rather differently now. Schumann's music, to use a common phrase, is of the kind that grows upon one. From its sheer originality, it is mostly difficult, sometimes even impossible, to grasp its full meaning at first. Not only are the passages so novel and unusual as to render the task of sight-playing more than ordinarily hard; but even when the notes are mastered, the whole beauty of the thought does not always strike the player. The music must be studied carefully and heard repeatedly to be fully appreciated. Wagner sneeringly said that "Schumann has a *tendency* towards greatness." But in his own line Schumann is just as great as Wagner is in *his* line. Liszt may have exaggerated when he called him "the greatest music-thinker since Beethoven"; but we can all agree with Liszt when he says: "The more closely we examine Schumann's ideas, the more power and life do we discover in them; and the more we study them, the more we are amazed at the wealth and fertility which had before escaped us." Schumann has now gained a secure hold among music-lovers, and it is probable that he will live when some of his contemporaries who passed him on the road to popular favour have been all but forgotten.

FELIX MENDELSSOHN: SINGER OF THE "SONGS WITHOUT WORDS"

Few instances can be found in history of a man so amply gifted with every good quality of mind and heart; so carefully brought up amongst good influences; endowed with every circumstance that would make him happy; and so thoroughly fulfilling his mission. Never perhaps could any man be found in whose life there were so few things to conceal and to regret.—SIR GEORGE GROVE.

IT is a proverb that names go by contraries. But proverbs are not always true. Mendelssohn's Christian name was Felix, and what Berlioz said of Mendelssohn's godson, Felix Moscheles, might truly be said of Mendelssohn himself: "So long as thou art Felix, that is, happy, thou shalt reckon on many friends." Mendelssohn stands as the type of the fortunate composer: "rich, talented, courted, petted, loved, even adored." His path was practically "roses, roses all the way." He never knew the cares that beset the lives of Beethoven, Mozart, Schubert, Wagner, and Schumann. The fires of adversity never touched *him*.

Whom the gods love, die young, it is said. That distinction Mendelssohn also enjoyed, and it gives an additional glamour to his personality. He was one of the most blameless characters in the whole history of music. His aunt declared that during his whole career she failed to recall a word or deed that could be criticised. Lampadius, one of his biographers, emphasises this. He says: "Living in loose capitals and surrounded by unprincipled people, he was true to all moral obligations, and perfect in all the relations of son, brother, lover, husband, and father. Surrounded by intriguers, he stood above them all, and was frank, transparent, honourable, noble; tempted by his sunny, enthusiastic, alert nature to do simply bright and genial things in music, he was thorough, studious, earnest, religious, and steadfastly consecrated to the highest and the best." Such was Felix Mendelssohn, the composer of *Elijah*, the man who conceived the "Songs without Words."

Mendelssohn's father used to say: "Formerly I was the son of my father: now I am the father of my son." This meant that he was himself of no account, whereas his father and his son were famous. And that was true. For Mendelssohn's grandfather was the once distinguished scholar and philosopher, Moses Mendelssohn. Moses was a Jew, and suffered all the disabilities which the Jews suffered at that time. He was small and hump-backed, too. And he was very poor; so poor that at one time his sole food was a weekly loaf, on which he carefully marked off his day's allowance, in case he should be tempted to forestall tomorrow's meal. But he had pluck and perseverance, and he rose to a high position. Here is a story of him. He had applied for the post of Court chaplain, and the Emperor told him that his success would depend upon the extempore sermon he should preach from a text given him when he was in the pulpit. At the critical moment Moses found that he had got a blank sheet of paper, but he did not lose his presence of mind, and very soon warmed up to an eloquent discourse on the creation of the world from nothing!

This, then, was the composer's grandfather. His father, Abraham Mendelssohn, was a banker who had improved his already good position in Hamburg by marrying a lady of property. The first fruit of the union was a daughter named Fanny; the second was the future musician, Jakob Ludwig Felix, born at Hamburg on the 3rd of February 1809. Shortly after his birth, Hamburg fell into the hands of the French, and the family fled to Berlin, where the banking business was continued. By this date Abraham Mendelssohn had realised the practical inconveniences of being a Jew; so he decided to bring up his family as Protestant Christians. At the same time he added the name of his wife's family, Bartholdy, to his own, desiring to be known by that rather than by so obviously Jewish a name as Mendelssohn. He tried to get his son to call himself Felix M. Bartholdy, that is, to drop the Mendelssohn altogether. The son declined, but he compromised by writing the full name, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. To-day no one thinks of using the double-barrelled name. Mendelssohn does not belong to Judaism, but to the world.

Felix and Fanny, most loving of brothers and sisters, were both musical. They remind one of Mozart and *his* sister. The mother was their first instructor, and it is delightful to read of her sitting beside them while they practised, and wondering at what she called their "Bach-fugue fingers." Fanny at first showed gifts equal to her brother, and Mendelssohn used to say that she played better than himself. But, like most girls, she "went and got married," and music lost what might have been a modestly rich inheritance. When the mother's teaching limits were reached, a couple of masters were called in, one for piano, another for theory. The theory master was Zelter, who had been a pupil of Bach. But so far, Mendelssohn, like his sister, was simply taking music as one of the adjuncts of a liberal education. There was as yet no idea of his making a profession of it. Abraham Mendelssohn only wanted to clothe his children with the essentials of general culture, and music had to be included.

In course of time, however, the boy declared emphatically for music as a profession. The father hesitated, though he had really been encouraging Felix all along, especially with music-makings in the home, when the boy would conduct the improvised orchestra. He would not rely on his own judgment, anyway. He would take the boy to Paris, and consult Cherubini about him. This was in 1825. "The lad is rich," said Cherubini; "he will do well in music. I myself will talk to him, and then he will do well." The "and then" is delectable, and just expresses the character of Cherubini, whom Mendelssohn compared with an extinct volcano covered with ashes and occasionally belching forth flames. However, it settled the matter for Mendelssohn. Very soon the stream of composition was running freely, and the young artist was working away at the profession of his life. The first really notable work that came from his pen was the overture to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, written when he was only seventeen. For neatness of expression, freshness of invention, management of form, and delicacy and finish of orchestration, Mendelssohn never surpassed this early work. It took him the best part of a year to write it, but surely it was a year well spent.

His life went on somewhat uneventfully for years after this; and when 1829 came his parents sent him off to England on the beginning of a "grand tour," which was to extend through most of the countries of Europe. Landing in London, he had his *Midsummer Night's Dream* overture performed, and the effect was electrical. All at once, and when least expected, the great gap left by the death of Beethoven seemed likely to be filled up. The story is told that after the performance the full score of the overture was left in a cab and entirely disappeared; but Mendelssohn wrote it all out again from memory, and it was found to be almost perfectly exact when compared with the separate orchestral parts.

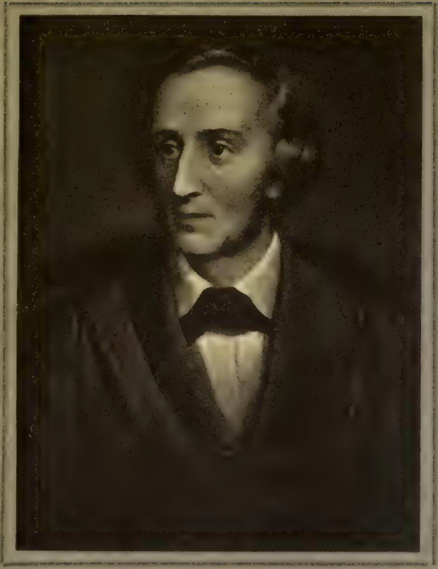
Mendelssohn had a great affection for London. He called it "the grandest and the most complicated monster on the face of the earth." He came to it again and again, and was never tired of praising the "smoky nest." Amid the glories of a Naples spring he could write that "My heart swells when I even think of London.' On this first visit he lodged with a Mr. Heinke, a German ironmonger, at 103 (now 79) Great Portland Street. Mrs. Heinke made capital bread-and-butter puddings, and Mendelssohn was so fond of them that he asked her to keep a reserve in the cupboard of his sitting-room, so that he might help himself when he came in late at night. The cup supporting a pie-crust was a novelty to him, and he was always much amused when it was lifted and the juice bubbled out. He had the simple enjoyments of an overgrown boy. An incident of this same visit may be told in his own words. He says: "The other day we three walked home from a highly diplomatic party, having had our fill of fashionable dishes, sayings, and doings. We passed a very enticing sausage shop, in which 'German Sausages, twopence each,' were laid out for show. Patriotism overcame us; each bought a long sausage. We turned into where it was quieter, Portland Street, and there consumed our purchases, Rosen and I being hardly able, for laughing, to join in the three-part songs of which Mühlenfelds would sing the bass." Mendelssohn had a rich appreciation of a joke. One English story vastly amused him. It was this: At a country funeral the parish clerk, or sexton, appeared in a red waistcoat. When the clergyman remonstrated with him upon the unseemly colour, the clerk replied: "Well, what does it matter, your reverence, so long as the *heart* is black?"

Mendelssohn had two grand pianos in his rooms at the Heinkes', and he was constantly practising. Moreover, he practised on a dumb keyboard while sitting up in bed. His public appearances were greeted with wild enthusiasm. The best account of them is in his own letters, for he was a charming letter-writter. "Old John Cramer led me to the piano like a young lady," he says, "and I was received with immense applause." At a morning concert he played Weber's *Concertstück*, when he was dressed in "very long white trousers, brown silk waistcoat, black necktie, and blue dress coat." Of another concert he tells, with consummate amusement, how a lady accidentally sat on a kettledrum.

The season closed, and at the end of July he set off for Edinburgh. He wanted to see Scotland, he said, because of the *Waverley Novels*, all of which he had read. For companion he took with him his friend Carl Klingemann, then secretary to the Hanoverian Embassy in London. He was enraptured with Edinburgh, and the Highland soldiers marching from the church to the Castle specially took his attention. He even got a Scots piper to play to him at his hotel. He was in a mood to be pleased with everything and everybody. "How kind the people are in Edinburgh, and how generous is the good God!" he wrote home. "The Scotch ladies," he naïvely observes, "deserve notice." The last evening of the visit was devoted to Holyrood, "where Queen Mary lived and loved." The chapel, he writes, "is now roofless; grass and ivy grow there"; and he adds: "I believe I found to-day, in that old chapel, the beginning of my *Scotch Symphony*." The

Scotch Symphony was indeed a direct result of this visit, as was also the *Hebrides* overture.

For Mendelssohn was not satisfied with seeing Edinburgh. By way of Stirling and Perth, he and Klingemann proceeded to the Highlands, with Highland weather accompanying them till they reached Glasgow. Earth and sky, in Mendelssohn's phrase, were "wet through." At Bridge of Tummel they were housed in an inn where they had "Scotch wooden shoes" for slippers, "tea with honey and potato cakes," and—whisky. The little boys, "with their kilts and bare knees and gay-coloured bonnets, the waiter in his tartan, old people with pigtails, all talk helter-skelter in their unintelligible Gaelic." No wonder the travellers thought they had "stumbled on a bit of culture" when they struck Fort-William! Later on, at Tobermory, they found everything "perfectly charming." Klingemann had somehow confounded the Hebrides with the Hesperides, and was disappointed (so he says) to find the oranges in the toddy instead of on the trees! But both Germans were getting used to "good Scots drink." A visit to Staffa and Iona proved that they were not getting used to Atlantic weather. Mendelssohn was a bad sailor, and was most unromantically sea-sick. To make matters worse, it rained all the time, until he exclaimed in despair that the Highlands appeared to brew nothing but whisky and bad weather. It was a constant matter of dispute between him and Klingemann whether the wet should be called rain or mist. There were no beds on the boat, and the passengers lay



MENDELSSOHN

about like herrings. Klingemann tells that when half asleep he tried to drive away the flies from his face and found that he was tearing at the grizzly locks of an old Highlander. Discomforts of various kinds attended them till they got to Glasgow, but in spite of it all, Mendelssohn hugely enjoyed himself. In one of his Glasgow letters he says: "It is no wonder that the Highlands have been called melancholy. But two fellows have wandered merrily about them, laughed at every opportunity, rhymed and sketched together, growled at one another and at the world when they happened to be vexed or did not find anything to eat; devoured everything eatable when they did find it, and slept twelve hours every night. These two were we, who will not forget it as long as we live." Nor has the musical world forgotten it, for if it had not been for that tour of 1829, we should not, as already indicated, have had the *Scotch Symphony* and the *Hebrides* overture.

The Scottish tour was almost immediately followed by a tour in Italy. There were other wanderings, including a visit to Paris, where, to use his own expression, Mendelssohn "cast himself thoroughly into the vortex." He was never in love with Paris and its musical ways, any more than Mozart. Parisians, he complained, were ignorant of Beethoven, and "believed Bach to be a mere old-fashioned wig stuffed with learning." When he met Chopin in 1834 his criticism was that Chopin "laboured a little under the Parisian love for effect and strong contrasts, and often lost sight of time, and calmness, and real musical feeling." It was, however, in Paris that Chopin, Berlioz, Hiller, and Mendelssohn, all of similar age, might have been seen arm-in-arm, promenading, and enjoying life to the full.

This period of Mendelssohn's career produced the *Walpurgis Night*, the great Symphony in A major, the *Melusine* overture, and the first of those famous "Songs without Words" which have been the companions of all lovers of classical piano music since they were first published. Piano music, when Mendelssohn began writing them, was mostly given over to mechanical dexterity. Musical claptraps, skips from one end of the keyboard to the other, endless shakes and arpeggios —that was the kind of thing in vogue. Mendelssohn's aim in these *Lieder ohne Wörte* was to restore the ill-treated piano to its dignity and rank; and with what success he carried out his purpose, every pianist knows. The name, *Lieder ohne Wörte*, was Mendelssohn's own. The English equivalent was not settled without difficulty. The first book was published in 1832, with the title of *Original Melodies for the Pianoforte*. It is astonishing to recall the fact that this first book took four years to reach a sale of 114 copies. It was Moscheles who found a publisher for it, and, foreseeing its value, arranged for a royalty for the composer. Mendelssohn, a year later, feared that his share would not amount to sixpence, but the publisher's books a few weeks after this time show that he received £4 : 16s. as royalty on forty-eight copies sold.

In 1833 Mendelssohn was appointed "Municipal Music Director" at Düsseldorf, and it was there that he began his oratorio *St. Paul*, a work which has been quite eclipsed in popularity by the companion *Elijah*. The Düsseldorf engagement formed really the starting-point in his professional career. Hitherto home influences had prevailed; now he was to be dependent on himself. Unfortunately he did not find the Düsseldorf duties agreeable. He complained that by four in the afternoon half the town was drunk, so that he had to do all his business in the morning. And the band was far from being to his mind. "I assure you," he wrote to Hiller, "that, at the beat, they all come in separately, not one with any decision, and in the *piano* the flute is always too loud; and not a single Düsseldorfer can play a triplet clearly, but all play a quaver and two semiquavers, and every *allegro* leaves off twice as fast as it began, and they carry their fiddles under their coats when it rains, and when it is fine they don't cover them at all. If you once heard me conduct this orchestra, not even four horses could bring you there a second time." This takes a very humorous view of the situation, but Mendelssohn found it anything but humorous; and it was a great relief to him when he was appointed conductor of the famous Gewandhaus concerts at Leipzig. Here the conditions were entirely congenial, and he went on with his work in the best of spirits, the musical idol of the town.

Still, there was something wanting to complete his happiness. He wanted a wife. In 1836 he went to Frankfort on a professional engagement, and an engagement of another kind soon followed. It was by the merest chance that he met Cécile Jeanrenaud, who was the daughter of a clergyman of the French Reformed Church; and the fact that he had fallen in love at first sight suggested caution to his prudent mind. He would test his feelings by going away for a month. If he were then still in love, he would propose. The result of the test we can gather from the following letter of September 1836, addressed to his mother: "I have only this moment returned to my home, but I can settle to nothing till I have written to tell you that I have just been accepted by Cécile. My head is quite giddy; it is already late at night, and I have nothing else to say; but I *must* write to you, I feel so rich and happy. To-morrow I will, if I can, write a long letter, and so, if possible, will my dear betrothed."

Mendelssohn nearly lost his head with blissful excitement. The marriage took place in March 1837, and during the honeymoon Mendelssohn expressed himself as more ecstatic than ever. As bad luck would have it, he had to tear himself away from his wife and start for England to conduct his *St. Paul* at the Birmingham Festival. And this is how he growls, writing to Hiller from London: "Here I sit in the fog, very cross, without my wife, writing you because your letter of the day before yesterday requires it, otherwise I should hardly do so, for I am much too cross and melancholy to-day. I must be a little fond of my wife, because I find that England and the fog, and beef and porter, have such a horribly bitter taste this time, and I used to like them so much."

Mendelssohn's married life was supremely happy. His beautiful, gentle, sensible wife spread a charm over the whole household, which enabled him to throw off such professional outside worries as beset him during his short, strenuous career. Everybody who met her praised Frau Mendelssohn. When Moscheles paid his first visit to the pair, he wrote: "Mendelssohn's wife is very charming, very unassuming and child-like, but not in my judgment a perfect beauty, because she is a blonde." So many men, so many ideas of female beauty! The Leipzig home looked out upon the St. Thomas school and church, once the scene of Bach's labours. This was probably no accident, for Mendelssohn's reverence for Bach was profound. He revived the *Matthew Passion* at Berlin when he was only twenty. During his visits to London, he was constantly preaching, playing, or talking about Bach. His performances of the organ preludes and fugues at various London churches, and at the Birmingham Festival, aroused great interest. It was he, too, who was chiefly instrumental in raising the Leipzig monument to the memory of Bach. Mendelssohn, in fact, "restored Bach to a world that had forgotten him for a hundred years," and this service alone was an immortality.

Leipzig remained Mendelssohn's home until 1841, when, at the instance of the recently-crowned Frederick William IV., he went to Berlin as prospective musical director of an Academy of Arts. Prospective, for the thing was still in the air; where, so far as Mendelssohn was concerned, it remained. He had never liked Berlin;

and as the Academy arrangements were still in a state of chaos, he returned to Leipzig after a year's waiting. About this time the King bestowed on him the Order of Merit, a distinction which he valued very lightly. One day he was walking with some friends across the bridge at Offenbach. One of them stayed behind to pay toll for the rest. "Is not that the Mr. Mendelssohn whose music we sing at our Society?" asked the toll-keeper. "It is." "Then, if you please, I will pay the toll for him myself." When Mendelssohn was informed of the incident, he said: "H'm! I like that much better than the King's Order." The composer made one more attempt to create a home in Berlin, when, by the death of his father and mother, the old family house became his property. But again he found it would not work. "The first step out of Berlin is the first step towards happiness," he wrote, after trying it for a reasonable time. The prophet was without honour where his youth had been spent.

Shortly after his return to Leipzig—the date was April 1843—Mendelssohn was able to realise his long-cherished project of founding a Conservatorium for the town. He did not live to see the full results of his inception, but the fame of the Leipzig Conservatorium has long been known to musical Europe and to America as well. Mendelssohn had plenty to do at the institution, for he was its virtual head, as well as one of the professors. Yet, all the time he was going on with his compositions—with the *Lobgesang*, and the *Festgesang*, from which is derived the tune for "Hark! the herald angels sing"; with the music for the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, with its ever-popular "Wedding March"; with *Athalie* and its famous "War March of the Priests," and with many other things besides. At the date we have reached, the great oratorio of *Elijah* was approaching completion. It was written specially for the Birmingham Musical Festival, where the composer conducted the first performance in August 1846. How it was received we learn from Mendelssohn himself. "No work of mine," he wrote to his brother, "ever went so admirably the first time, or was received with such enthusiasm by both the musicians and the audience." When the Festival was over he returned to London, "on purpose for a fish dinner at Lovegrove's"; spent a few days at Ramsgate "to eat crabs," and was back in Leipzig about the middle of September.

Elijah was Mendelssohn's last work: it killed him, just as the *Creation* killed Haydn. He had overworked his never too robust frame, and in his exhausted state the death of his beloved sister Fanny came to add to his prostration. He conducted a few of the Leipzig concerts, but his doctor forbade him to play any more in public. He fell into a profound melancholy, roaming about the fields for hours alone, or writing letters to friends bewailing his lot. Everybody saw how it must end. One evening, while accompanying a lady at the piano, he became insensible, and was carried home to his family. A cerebral attack followed, and on the 4th of November 1847 he breathed his last, in the presence of his disconsolate wife and children (five had been born to him) and a few cherished friends. Thus was another great musician cut off in the meridian of life.

Mendelssohn was one ot the most lovable of men, gentle as his music, pure as the mountain stream. He had nothing Bohemian about him. Weaknesses he had, no doubt, but they were lovable too. He had little coaxing ways with his friends, which made them love him with something of a child's love. When in company with Edward Devrient, he would sometimes pronounce his name with an affectionate and lingering drawl, "Ed-e-ward," *àpropos* of nothing in particular. He retained through life something of the impulsiveness and the simplicity of a child. He had a passion for cake and sweetmeats. Next to his own countrymen, he loved the English. Her Majesty the late Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were among his warmest admirers; and the story is told of how the Queen once sang some songs to his accompaniment at Buckingham Palace. She was not satisfied with her performance, and said to Mendelssohn: "I can do better—ask Lablache [her singing master] if I can't. But I am afraid of you." She asked Mendelssohn how she was to thank him for accompanying her. He said he would like to see her sleeping children, and when this was granted, he kissed them, thinking, we may be sure, of his own children at home.

In person Mendelssohn was small, but was counted handsome. His look is described as "dark and very Jewish." He had strikingly large dark-brown eyes, which became extraordinarily bright and expressive when he was animated. He was perhaps the most versatile of all the composers, for he was an adept at painting, billiards, chess, riding, swimming, and general athletics.

Schumann called Mendelssohn the Mozart of the nineteenth century. "I look upon Mendelssohn," he said, "as the first musician of his time, and pay him the homage due to a master." The musical world is not so enthusiastic about Mendelssohn now. The pendulum has swung to the other side: he was praised too much in his lifetime, and now he is praised too little. It has become the fashion to decry his music as lacking in depth. That is not surprising in an age which puts Wagner above Beethoven and prefers the pessimism of Tschaikowsky to the optimistic clarity of Haydn and Mozart. A modern young lady said she never played Mendelssohn "because there were no wrong notes"! But there are still some who do not like their composers to be eternally rushing through the thorn bush of dissonance, and to such Mendelssohn is ever welcome. As Sir George Grove said, there is surely enough of conflict and violence in life and in art without demanding more of it from Mendelssohn. When we want to be made unhappy by music, we can turn to others. In Mendelssohn we shall find nothing that is not at once manly and refined, clever and pure, brilliant and solid.

FREDERIC CHOPIN: THE POET OF THE PIANO

He came not with an orchestral army, as great geniuses are wont to come. He possesses only a little cohort, but it belongs to him wholly and entirely, even to the last hero.—SCHUMANN.

FREDERIC CHOPIN is one of the most romantic figures in musical biography. He was dreamy, tender, womanish, elusive, and (what most excited sympathetic interest in him while alive), he was a consumptive with a bad cough. And just what he was as a man, that he was as a composer. In his works are clearly mirrored his own daintiness and sensitiveness; his own feeling for the romantic and the beautiful and the *triste*. We see in them something of his modest, retiring nature; something of his ardent patriotism as a Pole; something of his disregard for the plaudits of the public.

Nothing of the sombre, religious earnestness of Bach is there; nothing of the fiery, robust vigour of Handel; nothing of the stately, heroic nobility of Beethoven. It is all like the beauty of the starry heavens, that cast their glitter upon the earth with a radiant yet somewhat chastened joy which speaks of the eternal. To admire Chopin's compositions bespeaks a keen appreciation of forms of strange and wondrous loveliness, like the forms of Fairyland. The player who would do him anything like justice must, of course, have executive ability of the very highest order. But Chopin requires much more than this. To play him and not to sympathise with him—not to have something of that spirit of romance that shines out in his compositions—is to court certain failure ; and that is why so many players whose talent is chiefly executive have had to give him up and leave him to the appreciation of the far-seeing few.

Frederic Francis Chopin was born at a village near Warsaw, in Poland, on the 22nd of February 1810. He was an only son, but he had three sisters, one of whom, the youngest, and Chopin's favourite, was cut off when only fourteen. For consumption was at work in this little family. Chopin's father was of French extraction, but he had thrown in his lot with the Poles long before he fell in love with Justina Krzyzanowska, whom he married in 1806. He was very poor, though gifted with a certain native distinction ; a man of education and refinement. To him, therefore, the composer owed some of his essential characteristics, to say nothing of his delicate health. Frederic Chopin was a weakly child from the first. His mother, whom he once called his "only love," used to be continually pleading with him to wrap up carefully. He was, in fact, a constant anxiety to his parents ; but he was a quiet and thoughtful boy, with the sweetest of dispositions, and if he suffered he seldom complained.

In his early years he showed himself so sensitive to music that his father confided him to the care of one Zwyny, a passionate disciple of the great Bach, who so advanced his pupil's progress at the piano that before long he became the wonder of the drawing-rooms of Warsaw. He was only nine when he made his first public appearance and played a concerto. It was characteristic of him that on this occasion he thought more of his personal appearance than of his pianism. His mother had rigged him out to the best advantage; and when, on his return, she asked him what the public liked best, he replied innocently: "Oh, mamma, everybody was looking at my lace collar." His success at this concert was, however, so marked that his parents felt they must prepare him for music as a profession; and their decision was presently supported by Madame Catalani, the great vocalist, who gave the boy a watch with a flattering inscription in praise of his talent.

The piano was Chopin's favourite instrument from the first. He took to it, we might say, as a duck takes to the water. To overcome its technical difficulties he laboured incessantly. He had a curious delight in extended arpeggios, and to render them easy he used a stretching contrivance of his own which he kept between his fingers during the night. He was more fortunate than Schumann, for the experiment evidently served him well. Though he *was* such a frail, delicate elf of a boy, he never lacked vivacity. The tricks he played on his sisters and his school-fellows were innumerable. He would improvise romances for them too; and he was such a good mimic that some family friends thought he should be an actor.

A piano stood in his room, and often during the night he would get up and start playing, much to the wonder of the maid, who concluded that he must be silly. Of course he began to compose. But he had received no lessons in composition; so his father now sent him to Joseph Elsner, the director of Warsaw Conservatoire, to have him drilled in the theoretical side of his art. Elsner proved just the right man. Most teachers of that period were pedantic old fossils, who pinned their pupils, talented and untalented alike, down to the stereotyped rules, and chillingly checked all attempts at originality. Elsner was not a teacher of that kind. When somebody observed to him that his pupil was not strict in his observance of the rules, Elsner replied: "Leave him alone; he does not follow the common way because his talents are uncommon. He has a method of his own, and his works will reveal an originality hitherto unknown." Discerning prophet! And happy Chopin, to have had such a liberal-minded instructor!

Chopin had been studying with Elsner for some time when his father thought it would be good for him to have a little tour before settling down to the active practice of his profession. Warsaw was a small place after all, and could never afford Frederic the opportunity of becoming acquainted with celebrated artists or of hearing the best performances of the classics. Thus a tour was arranged. Berlin was the first place visited. There the young artist heard a lot of music, including Handel's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*, which he said most nearly approached his idea of the sublime. Remember he was a very young man then. At a public meeting he sat close to Mendelssohn, but was too shy to speak to him. Later, when Mendelssohn made his acquaintance, he bestowed on him the significant name of "Chopinetto."

After Berlin, several places were visited, though their musical interests were not absorbing. In the course of his travels by diligence Chopin landed one day at an inn to find a piano there. It was in tune too (a rare thing for an inn piano), and Chopin had been itching to get at an instrument. He now attacked the keyboard with such enthusiasm (and skill) that soon he had all the travellers and all the people of the inn around him. He played on and on, oblivious of everything and everybody. Presently the driver of the coach came to announce that time was up. "Confound the disturber," roared the innkeeper, who had never heard his piano so played before. "Let the coach wait," said some of the travellers; and Chopin continued his improvisation. When he had exhausted himself, they brought him wine and cakes, and lady admirers "filled the pockets of the carriage with the best eatables that the house contained." Long years after, Chopin would recall this episode with the keenest pleasure. He said that the highest praise bestowed on him by the press was nothing to the homage of the

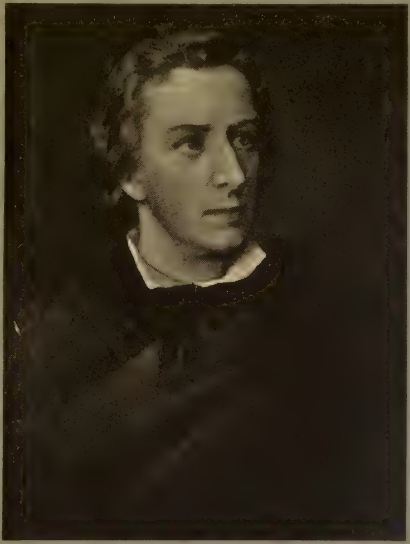
German traveller at the inn, who, in his eagerness to listen, had let his pipe go out.

It was about this time that Chopin met Hummel, one of the older classics of the piano, and himself a virtuoso of front rank. Hummel had been a pupil of Mozart, and was for some time Beethoven's rival in love. He had naturally much interest for Chopin, whose style was influenced by him in a mild way. Paganini, the wizard violinist, he heard about the same date, but Paganini was not much in Chopin's "line." And then came an important visit to "the beautiful musical Vienna." There he was besieged with requests to play in public—a thing which evidently surprised him in a city "which can boast of having heard a Haydn, a Mozart, and a Beethoven." But play he did. The best accounts of the performances are given by himself in his letters home. Some, he tells, objected that he played too softly; some, on the other hand, were "quite enthusiastic about the delicacy and elegance of my execution. My manner of playing pleases the ladies." It always did. One Vienna lady was, however, overheard remarking that it was a pity the youth had so little presence. Perhaps she would rather have had a tall, fine, officer-looking man at the piano. Chopin gave a second recital, partly because he was asked, but partly also for the curious reason that people might say in Warsaw: "He gave only *one* concert in Vienna, so he could not have been much liked." At any rate, Vienna swelled its voice into a full chorus of approval, and Chopin was enraptured.

Before he left the city he made the acquaintance of Carl Czerny, whose "exercises" for the piano have tried young fingers for so many generations. Of the parting Chopin meaningly said that Czerny was "warmer than all his compositions." At Prague and at Dresden he met more musical celebrities, but declined to play for fear of forfeiting the renown he had won in Vienna. And so the little tour, the *Wanderjahre*, ended. Chopin had tasted of the tree of knowledge: Warsaw he could no longer think of as a permanent home.

Before he left it a circumstance very usual with young people occurred: Chopin fell in love. Though he never married, he was often enough in love. Somebody says he could fall in and out of love in an evening; and that a crumpled rose-leaf was sufficient to induce frowns and capricious flights. This is an exaggeration; but undoubtedly Chopin did find, like Sterne, that it "harmonised the soul" to be in love. And perhaps it was good for his music too. Goethe's flirtations contributed something to his artistic development; and if Burns had not been so frequently "smitten," we should have been without some of his finest songs.

Chopin's first love was a student at the Warsaw Conservatoire, a certain Constantia Gladowska. Liszt (an authority on women) describes her as "sweet and beautiful"; and Chopin himself, when he got her to sing at one of his recitals, told that she "wore a white dress, and roses in her hair, and was charmingly beauti-



CHOPIN

ful." For a long time Chopin sighed in silence. "Six months have passed," he says in a letter, "and I have not yet exchanged a word with her of whom I nightly dream." And yet he admits that she inspired the Waltz (Op. 70) in D flat, as well as the Adagio of the F minor concerto. Chopin, in fact, loved but lacked the courage to speak out. Instead, he put his passion on music paper and played it. He bids somebody else tell Constantia that "so long as my heart beats I shall not cease to adore her"; that, "even after death, my ashes shall be strewn beneath her feet."

Alas! the course of this love did not go smoothly. Liszt gushes thus over the affair: "The tempest, which in one of its gusts tore Chopin from his native soil, like a bird dreamy and abstracted, surprised by a storm upon the branches of a foreign tree, sundered the ties of this first love, and robbed the exile of a faithful and devoted wife, as well as disinherited him of a country." The plain English of which is, that Constantia gave her heart to another; that Warsaw, in consequence, became to Chopin quite impossible; and that, in the November of 1830, he left it never to return. Rivers of ink have been spilt over this episode in his early career, but many of the details are obscure. The regrettable thing is that it should have affected Chopin's health. Stephen Heller, passing through Warsaw, found him thin and sunken, and told that already the Warsaw people had marked him out for an early death. Concealment of his love had, like a worm i' the bud, as Shakespeare says, fed on his pale cheeks.

"I am going out into the wide world," Chopin wrote, just before saying good-bye to his home for ever—going out "with the keyboard and a brain full of beautiful music as his only weapons." The parting with his family was sad enough. The father he saw once more in life; the mother he never saw, though she outlived him by ten years. At Wola, a village beyond Warsaw, a romantic incident occurred. His old master Elsner, with all the pupils of the Warsaw Conservatoire, met him, sang a cantata composed for the occasion, and presented him with a silver goblet *filled with Polish soil.* That same soil was, after a few short years, to be strewn on his coffin in the cemetery of Père la Chaise, at Paris.

It was Paris that Chopin now settled in, though he had no definite idea of his destination when he left Warsaw. As a matter of fact, he made visits to Breslau and Dresden and Vienna and other places before finally deciding for Paris. He was in Vienna when Warsaw rose in revolt against the Russians, and his patriotism prompted a shouldering of arms on behalf of his country. Writing from Vienna, he appeals to a friend: "Shall I go to Paris? Shall I return home? Shall I stay here? Shall I kill myself?" It was just like Chopin to be so undecided. But the Fates had decided for him. In the September of 1831 Warsaw was captured by the Russians; and in October Chopin was in Paris, a youth still under twenty-two, lamenting his country's downfall, and wondering what had happened to the beloved Constantia. How he felt about Poland's fate he has expressed, so far as music can express such feelings, in the magnificent Étude in C minor (Op. 10, No. 12), which has been well described as one of the truest and saddest utterances of despairing patriotism.

But what was Chopin to do in Paris, now that he was there? Well, first of all he had to prove himself as a pianist, and to perfect his technique. Kalkbrenner, whose works nobody plays now, was at that time the leading teacher of the piano in Paris, and to him Chopin went to consult about lessons. Kalkbrenner heard him play, and then said he must study with him for three years. He objected, it seems, to such "unconstitutional effects" as Chopin was in the habit of producing by using his third finger for his thumb, and other equally trifling matters of technique. These old masters found, one suspects, that they could not play Chopin, and so they decried him. Moscheles, another virtuoso of the period, says in one of his letters: "I am a sincere admirer of Chopin's originality; he produces the newest and most attractive piano work. But personally I object to his artificial and often forced modulations; my fingers stick and stumble at such passages, and practise them as I will, I never play them fluently." That last remark lets us into the secret, for Moscheles admitted when he heard Chopin himself that what his fingers could not master ceased to offend when Chopin's own delicate hands manipulated the keys.

At any rate, three years was too long a time for Chopin to give up to Kalkbrenner. He had his living to make, and he decided to perfect his technique by himself. Meanwhile, he would give Paris a taste of his powers by a public recital. The recital came off in February 1832, and though the audience was small the artistic success was great. Mendelssohn was present and "applauded furiously." Chopin made no money by the concert, but he made a reputation—a reputation which was further enhanced by a second recital in May. Still, his path was far from being clear. Fame was all very well, but fame would not feed and clothe him. His finances were running low, and his spirits went down with them. "My health," he wrote, "is very bad. I appear, indeed, merry, especially when I am among my fellow-countrymen; but inwardly something torments me—a gloomy presentiment, unrest, bad dreams, sleeplessness, yearning, indifference to everything, to the desire to live and the desire to die." In this melancholy mood, he conceived the mad idea of emigrating to America. Imagine Chopin, the musical dreamer, in dollar-land! Then a fortunate incident happened which turned the tide in his affairs.

Prince Radziwill took him to a soiree at the Rothschilds'. He was asked to play, as a matter of course, and he played so superbly that he was not only overwhelmed with compliments, but was promised several good-paying pupils on the spot. After that, he speedily came to the front, both in society and as a teacher. Pupils flocked to him; he had invitations from all the grandees; distinguished people called at his rooms; and concert managers struggled for his services.

"All the Frenchwomen dote on him," said one. "He is the fashion, and we shall no doubt shortly have gloves *à la Chopin*." Chopin himself wrote: "I move in the highest circles and I don't know how I got there." Thus was the young Pole launched on his career of popularity in Paris. The popularity never waned, and he had as much teaching as he could get through: up at least to the time of the Revolution, when the Parisians had something else to think of than music lessons.

Chopin would fain have lived quietly, if that had been possible, which it was not. His friends and admirers would not leave him in peace, and would often invade his rooms in a body. The mere fact of his being a Pole brought him irksome and uninvited attentions, for Paris was greatly in sympathy with the Poles at this time. "Vivent les Polonais!" the mob would cry when they identified a prominent Pole on the streets. Chopin was already beginning to show unmistakable signs of the chest trouble which ultimately cut him off, and this made him more than ever an object of tender interest to the fair sex. Of passing fancies he had several, and we need not dwell on them. But one fancy which was more than passing we *must* dwell on. Chopin's connection with Madame Dudevant, the French novelist, better known as "George Sand," was, in some respects, romantic enough. George Sand was already a wife and a mother, living in Paris apart from her husband, when Chopin met her. One would have said there could be no attraction between these two, their tastes and temperaments being so different. We know what Chopin was: dainty, neurotic, tender as a woman, dreamy, slim of frame; a man whose whole appearance made those who saw him think of the convolvuli, which, on the slenderest of stems, balance divinely-coloured chalices of such vaporous tissues that the slightest touch destroys them. Contrast this with George Sand. To begin with, she was not pretty. Liszt speaks of her "masculine countenance." De Musset says she was "brown, pale, and dull complexioned." Others describe her as short and stout, dark and swarthy, with "a thick and unshapely nose of the Hebraic cast, a coarse mouth, and a small chin." Balzac, the novelist, wrote that her dominant characteristics were those of a man; that she was "not to be regarded as a woman." We know that she often wore men's clothes, and as often smoked "enormously thick Trabucco cigars." Chopin was very doubtful about her when first introduced. "What a repellent woman that Sand is!" he remarked to Ferdinand Hiller. "But is she really a woman? I am inclined to doubt it.' Writing to a friend, he said: "Yesterday I met George Sand. She made a very disagreeable impression on me." Yet this was the woman who, according to most of the biographers, broke Chopin's heart and directly caused his early death. As Liszt puts it, she "inspired the frail and delicate Chopin with an intensity of admiration which consumed him, as a wine too spirituous shatters the fragile vase."

It would take a long time to tell the story in full, It must suffice to say that George Sand, falling in love with her hero, pretended to the world that she was only looking after him in a motherly way; nursing him through the winter, when his malady was most troublesome, and relieving him from the worries of business and household affairs, against which his artistic nature rebelled. She carried him off, contrary to medical advice, to an island in the Mediterranean, where he was nearly brought to death's door, and where the fatigue of tending him became so much more pronounced than the pleasure of flirting, that her attachment began to wane. Back in Paris, she complained more and more of the tiresomeness of her self-imposed task; and in the end there was a complete rupture, after eight years of what she called "maternal devotion." Unfortunately the love had burnt itself out on one side only: to the very last Chopin would have died for this woman who had been the unworthy object of one of the most consuming passions which nineteenth-century romance gave birth to. "All the cords that bound me to life are broken," he would pensively remark.

After the separation, the grief and agitation of his mind, combined with his physical weakness, brought him almost to the gates of death. But he got a little better for a time, and when the Revolution broke out, in 1848, he was able to start for England, where he hoped to make some much-needed money. Still, he was in a wretched state of health. People were positively pained to see him. At Lord Falmouth's he "came into the room bent double, and with a distressing cough. He looked like a revived corpse." At Broadwood's piano saloons he had to be carried upstairs, being unequal to the exertion. For all this, when he sat down to the instrument he played, as we are told, "with extraordinary strength and animation." He gave some public recitals, and played at Court after being presented to the Queen.

He went to Scotland for recitals in Edinburgh and Glasgow (he played in Manchester too), but the climate was too severe for him, and the kindly-meaning people gave him no rest. In one letter he writes: "I have played at a concert in Glasgow before all the *haute volée*. To-day I feel very much depressed—oh, this fog! Although the window at which I am writing commands the most splendid view in Scotland, I can see nothing except when the sun breaks momentarily through the mist. I feel weaker and weaker, and cannot compose, not from want of inclination, but from physical causes; and besides, I am in a different place every week. But what am I to do? I must at least lay by something for the winter." Pathetic it is to think of this "revived corpse" dragging himself about to play for a fee that any of the great recital pianists nowadays would scorn. At Glasgow and at Manchester Chopin was paid just £60.

Tired, ill, distracted, hopeless about the future, he was soon on his way to Paris, resolved that he would appear no more in public. Alas! it was a needless resolve. The seeds of consumption had lain too long in his frail frame, and in a few months he was stretched on the bed from which he was never more to rise. As his last hour approached he asked the Countess Potocka to sing something. Mastering her emotion, she sang Stradella's Hymn to the Virgin. "Oh, how beautiful! My God, how beautiful! Again! again!" exclaimed the dying composer. Evening closed in, and the next morning, feeling a little better, he asked the last Sacrament and confessed to a Polish priest. To those around him he gave his blessing, and with one sigh closed his eyes on the world. Many a tear was shed when his death became known, for he was beloved by a wide circle of friends. According to an old custom, he was laid in the grave in the clothes he wore at his recitals, and over his coffin was emptied the goblet of Polish earth which he had brought with him from that parting scene outside Warsaw. Thus passed away, at the early age of thirty-nine, the greatest creative musician that Poland has ever given to the world. He was laid to rest in Père la Chaise. Near by is the splendid mausoleum of Rossini, inscribed in gold letters with the simple name of the composer. Higher up is the musicians' corner, where lie Cherubini, Hérold, and Boieldieu. Chopin has a white marble statue bearing the inscription: "Frederic Chopin. Erected by his Friends." He sleeps, but his works will live for ever.

Those who have read thus far will already know Chopin the man. He was, let it be repeated, exactly like his compositions. Pauer says truly that he never in his life wrote a bar of music that contained a vulgar idea. And there was nothing vulgar about himself. That same sense of refinement and delicacy that we experience in listening to a sympathetic rendering of his best works is just what every one who met him seems to have found to be his characteristics as a man. He liked having fine, neat clothes; he liked flowers always in his rooms; he disliked smoking. These are details upon which we may found. Nobody knew him better than George Sand, and her description is therefore worth quoting. She says:

> Gentle, sensitive, and very lovely, he united the charm of adolescence with the suavity of a more mature age; through the want of muscular development he retained a peculiar beauty, and exceptional physiognomy, which, if we may venture so to speak, belonged to neither age nor sex. It was like the ideal creations with which the poetry of the Middle Ages adorned the Christian temples. The delicacy of his constitution rendered him interesting in the eyes of women. The full yet grateful cultivation of his mind, the sweet and captivating originality of his conversation, gained for him the attention of the most enlightened men, whilst those less highly cultivated liked him for the exquisite courtesy of his manners.

To this may be added the picture drawn of him by Liszt, who knew him well, and did much to help him forward in his early public career: "His blue eyes were more spiritual than dreamy; his bland smile never writhed into bitterness. The transparent delicacy of his complexion pleased the eye; his fair hair was soft and silky; his nose slightly aquiline; his bearing so distinguished, and his manners stamped with such high breeding, that involuntarily he was always treated like a prince. His gestures were many and graceful; the tones of his voice veiled, often stifled. His stature was low, his limbs were slight."

These quotations not only help us to understand the nature of the man: they show us also how intimate is the connection between what may be called the external Chopin and the internal as exhibited in his works.

As a player Chopin was always heard to best advantage in a small room or building, and he knew this so well that he had a life-long aversion to appearing in large concert halls. His touch, to say nothing of the style of his music, was too delicate for anything but a small and select company, who could appreciate the poetical refinement of what Liszt called his "cabinet pictures." "I am not suited for concert-giving," he once said to Liszt. "I feel timid in presence of the public; their breath stifles me; their curious gaze paralyses me." When asked if he studied much before giving a concert, he would reply: "It is a dreadful time for me; I do not like public life, but it is part of my profession." Schumann said that Chopin knew the piano as no one else did. Some called him the Ariel of the piano; some said his playing reminded them of the warbling of linnets. George Sand had a pet name for him, and it was "Velvet Fingers." Such was Chopin the man and the player.

About Chopin the composer, as seen in his works, a whole book might be written, and indeed more than one book *has* been written. His compositions are absolutely unique of their kind, for Chopin is the poet of the piano *par excellence*, and has had neither imitators nor rivals. His finest works are to be found in the smallest forms, such as the Nocturne, the Mazurka, the Ballade, and the Study. They are all so thoroughly tinged with the native sentiment that they seem to be suggested by thoughts of that country of his which has presented so many different phases of character, like every other country struggling for its freedom. His originality is very remarkable; he not only invented new chords and modes of treatment, but also new forms. He was fond of blending the major and minor keys—that is, he applied unreservedly to pieces written in major keys chords belonging of right to the minor keys, and *vice versa*; and the amalgamation offered to him many new and surprising harmonic effects. The Impromptu, the Ballade, and the Valse de Salon are all his creations. In his eighteen Nocturnes he gives us music of great charm, and of a nobility of feeling rarely met with. His twenty-four grand Studies are standard works, of great beauty and lasting value, and have not been surpassed.

But why labour a point which every musical amateur recognises? Rubinstein said finely, and with finality: "The piano bard, the piano rhapsodist, the piano mind, the piano soul is Chopin. Tragic, romantic, lyric, heroic, dramatic, fantastic, soulful, sweet, dreamy, brilliant grand, simple: all possible expressions are found in his compositions, and all are sung by him upon his instrument." This is the sum and substance of Frederic Chopin. He lived his life, gave what was in him, and died with a name destined, like the name of Mary Stuart, to exert over unborn generations a witchery and a charm unique in the history of his art.

RICHARD WAGNER: THE REVOLUTIONARY OF THE MUSIC DRAMA

There must be a beyond. In Wagner there is none. He is too perfect. Never since the world began did an artist realise himself so perfectly. He achieved all he desired.—GEORGE MOORE.

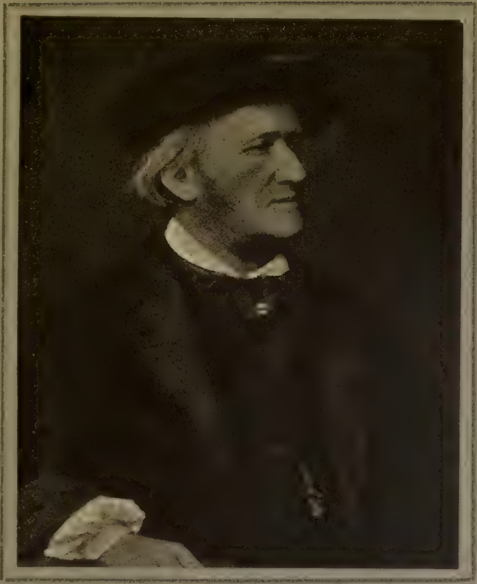
IN a fit of morbid despair at the apathy of the public, Wagner once declared his music to be "the music of the future." At that time it was emphatically so; now it is just as emphatically the music of the present. Fifty years ago Wagner was looked upon as practically a musical madman, a charlatan who had arisen to throw all established art forms and traditions to the winds, to trample under his feet the hitherto accepted great gods of the divine art. The pendulum has swung to the other side, and perhaps we are making too much of Wagner now. But at least we have arrived at the point of accepting him as a colossal genius in his own domain, the domain of music drama. And whereas his contemporaries, for the most part, imagined that he would have no place in musical history, we are all perfectly assured now that the future of music can no more ignore him than it can ignore Beethoven or Bach. Wagner altered the whole course of modern opera, and founded a musical system which it is practically impossible for later composers to set aside.

Richard Wagner was the youngest of a family of nine children, and was born at Leipzig on May 22, 1813. His father, a man of good education, occupied some minor official post in connection with the police. But Wagner never knew his father. Around his cradle, as some one has put it, was fought the battle of the nations. One hundred and twenty thousand Germans and Frenchmen lay dead or dying in the fields near Leipzig when the baby Richard was snuggling peacefully in his cot; and the epidemic fever which came stalking abroad to finish the grim work of carnage rendered the future composer fatherless when only five months old. Frau Wagner, left thus with a big charge and little means, could hardly do better than marry again. The second husband was a certain Ludwig Geyer, a writer of plays and an actor at the Dresden Theatre; and to Dresden therefore the Wagners removed. Geyer proved a very good step-father. But he, too, was cut off before he could have any real influence on the boy, for he died when Richard was only ten. Still, as Sir Hubert Parry says, it is probable that Geyer's profession added strength to the already strong theatrical influences which were present in the Wagner family, and thereby helped towards those favourable conditions which were necessary for the achievement of the special work the boy was to do in the world.

Most of the great composers have been prodigies, as we have seen. Wagner ripened late, like Schumann.

It was literature that interested him first, rather than music. Thus at school he took a fancy for Greek, and made great progress in it. He conceived also a vast admiration for Shakespeare, and under that influence wrote a tragedy himself when he was fourteen. A wonderful effort it was: a sort of mixture of "Hamlet" and "Lear" and "Titus Andronicus." Forty-two persons were killed one after the other long before the end; and in order to have anybody on the stage some of the characters were brought back as ghosts! All this time his musical leanings had shown themselves only in a very faint way. As a child of seven he used to strum on the piano, upon which, later on, his Latin tutor gave him some lessons, only to predict that musically he would "come to nothing." It should be remarked, however, that Wagner always hated the piano, and never could play it well. "He could never fondle a piano without making it howl," says one. There is a curious story in illustration, and it introduces us to Wagner's first love, a Jewish beauty called Leah David. In adult life Wagner had a fierce hatred for the Jewish race, but Jewish youth and beauty bewitched him in his teens. Leah had a Dutchman cousin who was a pianist, and Wagner, jealous, criticised his playing. He was invited to do better, and did so badly that he rushed from the room vowing vengeance on the Dutchman. This put him out with the pretty Jewess, who of course married her cousin. "It was my first love sorrow, and I thought I should never forget it," said Wagner.

When his step-father was dying, he was heard to



WAGNER

mutter that "something worth while might be made of Richard." Wagner used to repeat this with pride, adding: "I remember how I long imagined that something *would* be made of me." But what was the "something" to be? That remained uncertain for many a day. It was a hearing of one of Beethoven's symphonies that practically brought about the decision. "I fell ill of a fever," says Wagner, speaking of this turning-point in his career, "and when I recovered I was—a musician." He set to the study of Beethoven's works in dead earnest, and it is stated that he knew them all familiarly before he was twenty. Early in his teens he heard Goethe's *Egmont* with Beethoven's incidental music. This inspired him with the idea of writing incidental music for his own portentous tragedy, mentioned above. And so the die was cast: Richard would be a composer.

He sought out a music master, who, however, was "not successful in controlling and directing his energies." Richard experimented with various large works, which, of course, did not fit in with the master's views, and as Richard would not brook adverse criticism, the two parted company. Richard had no liking for moderate experiments: he must try his hand at works on a grand scale. He wrote overtures, for example, and one of them he carried to Dorn, the conductor at the Dresden Theatre Royal. It was set down in ink of three different colours—red for the string parts, green for the wood-winds, and black for the brass. Dorn was kind enough to put the thing in performance, "much to the bewilderment of the audience," says the biographer.

Meanwhile, in 1828, Wagner went back to Leipzig, to enter the University there. Music was temporarily laid aside in favour of classical studies. But only temporarily. He took more lessons, this time from an excellent musician called Weinlich, cantor of that same Thomas School with which Bach was connected. The lessons went on for six months, and then Weinlich told his pupil that he had arrived at technical independence, and might be left to himself. This was indeed the case, for Wagner had no more formal instruction in his art. But he was one of those men who develop slowly. His aims were very high, and he had to go through an immense amount of experiment before he found out how to express himself fully.

It would be of no use to speak at any length of his early efforts at composition, for they are all forgotten now. An opera was produced in 1832, but it was a failure. Then Wagner went to Würzburg to fill the post of chorus-master at the theatre there. His next attempt was a three-act opera called *Die Feen* (The Fairies), but neither the libretto (described by a critic as "clotted nonsense") nor the music could make the thing "go." These experiences rather sickened Wagner of Würzburg; and in 1834 he moved to Magdeburg, where he was engaged in a similar capacity at the theatre.

In 1836 he "billed" Magdeburg with a new opera for performance, but the audience were so disappointed with it on the first night that the second representation had to be stopped half-way through in deference to the empty benches. Soon after this, Wagner got an engagement as conductor at Königsberg. He had fallen in love some time before, and his attraction to Königsberg is explained by the fact that the lady was now fulfilling an engagement at the theatre there. For Minna Planer was an actress: described as pretty by some, and as of a "pleasing appearance" by others. One painter said she was "pretty as a picture" but had a sober, unimaginative soul. The wedding followed, but it soon became apparent that Minna was not the kind of mate Wagner wanted. "I was in love," he said afterwards, "and I persisted in getting married, thus involving myself and another in unhappiness." This is hardly the sort of book in which to discuss Wagner's or any other composer's matrimonial affairs in detail. But much has been written in direct condemnation of Minna Planer, and a feeling of chivalry dictates a mild protest.

When Wagner married, he was a young man struggling with poverty and beaten down by disappointed hopes. By and by, as his genius developed and expanded, he found that he could not get on with Minna, and a separation was the ultimate result. But Minna was not solely to blame. Wagner's biographers have nothing worse to say of her than that she failed to recognise her husband's genius. But how many much better instructed and more discerning people than a popular actress was likely to be, recognised Wagner's genius at that time? When Wagner married he was totally unknown to the great world of music. How should Minna Planer know that she was giving her hand to a man who, though at present obscure and impecunious, would successfully fight against all difficulties, and whose works would, in the distant future, become not only celebrated but even popular?

Let us be fair to Minna Wagner. That she had not the perception which the Wagner biographers demand of her was her misfortune rather than her fault. And there is this to be remembered to her credit, that she suffered bravely and even gladly all those terrible hardships which beset her husband during the changeful years after the marriage. It is recorded that she pawned her jewelry under some domestic distress. Wagner's diary reveals that in Paris, when he invited a sick and starving German to breakfast, his wife told him there could be no breakfast as there was no money in the house. Wagner used to recount with moist eyes these stories of his wife's self-denial, and of "the cheerfulness with which she, the pretty actress of former days, cooked what meals there were to cook, and scrubbed what clothes there were to scrub." For those who know all the facts it is impossible to refrain from sympathising with Minna Wagner, thrown out at last upon a cold world, to live isolated, to die with a shadow upon her name as a wife.

But to return to the date of the marriage, the year 1836. Wagner's life at this period was necessarily Bohemian. He had grand ideas, but no means of turning them into remunerative realities. And now, anchored to a wife, he found his difficulties greater than ever. Always on the move, we hear of him next at Riga, where he filled another miserable post at the theatre. But he had already begun to look towards Paris, and was indeed now composing the kind of opera which he supposed would bring him success there. He had read Bulwer Lytton's *Rienzi*, and had been taken with the subject. The Parisians, he saw, were fond of glitter and noise, and *Rienzi* would be exactly the thing for them.

In the summer of 1839 this new plan came to maturity, and Wagner, with his wife and a big Newfoundland dog (he had a fancy for dogs), started on board a sailing vessel for London, intending to make his way from thence to Paris. The voyage lasted nearly a month, for there was a terrific storm on the North Sea. Wagner wrote afterwards: "The only time I ever went to sea, I barely escaped shipwreck. Should I go to America, I am sure the Atlantic would receive me with a cyclone." However, the delay proved of ultimate advantage to Wagner, for, to relieve the tedium, he got into talk with the sailors, and they recalled to him the story of the Flying Dutchman, which was to bear fruit later. "Three times," he says, "we suffered from the effects of heavy storms. The passage through the Narrows made a wondrous impression on my fancy. The legend of the Flying Dutchman was confirmed by the sailors, and the circumstances gave it a distinct and characteristic colour in my mind." We shall say nothing of the London visit, further than to note that Wagner lost his dog the day he landed. In great distress, he ran about asking everybody in broken English if they had seen the animal. Next day he started off to the Docks in search of the favourite, but in vain. On his return to the "King's Arms," Soho, his step was recognised on the stairs, when, to Wagner's delight, the dog "burst into barkter."

Wagner reached Paris in the autumn, with the MS. of *Rienzi* in his pocket, full of hope, but empty in purse. He had expected to get *Rienzi* staged, and thereby to win fame and fortune. Alas! the managers of the Grand Opera would have nothing to do with *Rienzi*, and the despairing composer was left face to face with a struggle for bare existence. First he tried to get a post as a singer in a small theatre, and was told that he could not sing. Next he wrote articles for a musical paper; wrote even a couple of novelettes. A music publisher proved kindly, and engaged him in "making arrangements for every conceivable instrument, even the cornet." In spite of all this drudgery, Wagner clung to Paris with a kind of desperate hope. Professing to believe that his non-success with *Rienzi* was due to the libretto, he started on a new opera having less of a romantic story and less of mere theatrical show. This was the *Flying Dutchman*, completed in seven weeks. Unfortunately, the *Dutchman* was no more wanted in Paris than *Rienzi*; and the latter having by this time been accepted at Dresden, where its composer was better known, Wagner bade farewell to Paris, and in the spring of 1842 saw the German Rhine for the first time, and swore eternal fealty to the Fatherland.

The Dresden performance of *Rienzi* duly came off. It was so successful that the *Flying Dutchman* was immediately accepted, and the composer himself made conductor of the Dresden Opera, at the comfortable salary of £250 a year. This was in 1842, and Wagner remained at Dresden till 1848. It might have been supposed that his troubles were now practically ended. But in reality they were only beginning. When the *Dutchman* was performed at Dresden its reception was lukewarm and hesitating. The public could neither understand it nor appreciate it. It was too serious for them, accustomed as they were to the then prevailing style of Italian opera, with its "glittering processions, splendid scenery and groupings, and imposing action coupled with brilliant music." Berlin tried it in 1844, but with what success may be gathered from the fact that not for ten years after was it once heard anywhere else. Wagner was dismayed. "I was in sufficiently ill-humour to remain silent," he said.

He did not remain silent, for it was in 1845 that *Tannhäuser* was given for the first time, again at Dresden. But that, too, failed to bring him the success it should have brought. The intellectual *élite* of Dresden showed little sympathy towards the work, which, besides, provoked a storm of newspaper controversy. Critics complained that *Tannhäuser* was totally destitute of melody, and musicians thought that the breaches of technical rule made by the composer were outrageous. A prominent London musical writer ridiculed it as a chaos of absurdities. Prosper Mérimée declared that he could compose something as good after hearing his cat walk over the piano keys. Rossini went to a performance, and when asked his opinion replied: "It is too important and too elaborate a work to be judged after a single hearing; but so far as I am concerned, I shall not give it a second." Even when the now popular Overture was first performed by the London Philharmonic in 1855, the *Times* printed this amazing criticism: "A more inflated display of extravagance and noise has rarely been submitted to an audience, and it was a pity to hear so magnificent an orchestra engaged in almost fruitless attempts at accomplishing things which, even if really practicable, would lead to nothing." Verily, the whirligig of time does bring in its revenges. For some years past, *Tannhäuser* has been one of the greatest draws in the operatic repertoire.

But Wagner could not foresee this in 1845. Regarding his then state of mind he wrote: "A feeling of complete isolation came over me. It was not my vanity. I saw a simple possibility before me, namely, to induce the public to understand and participate in my aims as an artist." A possibility, indeed, but hardly a probability; for Wagner was already far away from the familiar and accepted operatic path, and as concession and compromise were not in his nature, he was again left with his old companions of defeat and despair. Still, he worked on. *Lohengrin* was completed in 1848, and without staying to consider as to its future, he began to give his mind to its successor. Meanwhile, the political troubles of the country were occupying the attention of the people. The poor were crying out against the oppressions of the rich, and revolutionary clubs were being formed everywhere. Wagner was, as Liszt described him, a born reformer, undaunted by blood or fire; and no sense of discretion or expediency would restrain him at this juncture. He made red-hot Republican speeches, and even, it is said, fought at the barricades.

Ultimately, in 1849, a warrant was issued for his apprehension, which was renewed in 1853, calling upon all German officials to "arrest Richard Wagner, one of the most prominent adherents of the Revolutionary party, and to deliver him up to the Royal Court of Justice." The police description gives us a fair idea of what the man Wagner was like. It ran: "Wagner is 37 to 38 years old, of middle height, has brown hair, wears glasses; open forehead; eyebrows brown; eyes grey blue; nose and mouth well proportioned; chin round. Particulars: in speaking and moving he is hasty." The "particulars" are slight, but essential. Animation, says a biographer, marked all his ways, and at times he revelled in the wildest spirits. Periods of deep depression occurred to him, but his nervous energy seldom deserted him.

Wagner luckily escaped arrest. Mainly by the help of Liszt, he got safely out of the country and soon found himself once more in Paris. Liszt, to his everlasting credit, never failed to answer his appeals for help. It was during these early days of exile (in 1850) that this loyal friend, to whom the score was dedicated, brought *Lohengrin* to a hearing at Weimar. "At the end of my stay in Paris," wrote Wagner, referring to 1850, "when, ill, miserable, and despairing, I sat brooding over my fate, my eye fell on the score of my *Lohengrin*, totally forgotten by me. Suddenly I felt something like compassion that this music should never sound from off the death-pale paper. Two words I wrote to Liszt; his answer was that preparations were made for the performance on the largest scale the limited means of Weimar would permit." It is pathetic to note that Wagner himself was afraid to go to Weimar, even secretly, to hear his own work. He used to say that for many years he was the only German who had not heard it; for he did not hear it till 1861. At first, and indeed for many years, *Lohengrin* was regarded with the utmost indifference, if not aversion. It did not reach London till 1875, when a leading critic described it as an opera without music. Even Germany failed to appreciate its beauties. Gustav Engel said it seemed like "blubbering baby-talk"; while Dr. Hanslick, the great Viennese critic, remarked that "the simplest song of Mendelssohn appeals more to heart and soul than ten Wagnerian operas." How ashamed these purblind critics would feel now if they could rise from the dead to learn of the hold that *Lohengrin* has gained on the public!

Well, poor Wagner was an exile, and could not go to Weimar to hear this his own work. The isolation and banishment told severely on his health and spirits, and for a time he did nothing new. During a temporary residence at Zurich he wrote a great deal on the theory and philosophy of his art. But his hopes always drifted back, as he did himself, to Paris. He thought now of influencing directors and managers of theatres by a series of concerts at which extracts from his operas should be given. But here again he was mistaken, and once more he had to give up the campaign after a heavy expenditure of time and money. In 1861 the edict that had so long separated him from his native country was removed, and he returned to Germany. During the late years of his exile he had been working at the stupendous drama of *The Ring*. He had been induced to start it by a cheerful message sent him by Liszt just after the Weimar performance of *Lohengrin*. "Behold! we have come so far," wrote Liszt; "now create us a new work, that we may go still further." The new work was created, but the plan which Wagner had mapped out for himself as early as 1851 was not realised until 1875, when Bayreuth first heard the *Rhinegold*, the *Valkyrie*, *Siegfried*, and the *Dusk of the Gods*—the four great music dramas which compose *The Ring*.

When he returned to Germany after his exile, he had little better than begun the gigantic creation, and he saw no hope of ever completing it. He was poor and unhappy, and the lack of general appreciation of his former music dramas chilled his incentive if not also his inspiration. But in man's affairs, as in the natural world, the darkest hour is often before the dawn. Wagner's deliverance was at hand. Everybody has heard of the mad Kings of Bavaria. Well, it was one of these tragically pathetic monarchs, Ludwig II., who, mad as he was, saved Wagner to the world. When Ludwig mounted the throne of Bavaria, he was a youth of nineteen, fond of music, and with ample means of indulging any whim in that direction. He had taken a fancy for Wagner, and he now offered the composer a substantial income, besides a handsome villa in the vicinity of the palace. The story is familiar, how Ludwig sent Adjutant Sauer to seek the composer. Sauer went first to Vienna and then to Switzerland, without success. Then one told him: "Wagner is in Stuttgart, hiding from his creditors." So it turned out, and the statement has frequently been repeated that Wagner was just about to put an end to his life when Ludwig's welcome emissary arrived. Ludwig, he wrote shortly after, "wants me to be always with him, to work, to rest, and to produce my music dramas. He will give me all I need. I am to finish *The Ring*, and everything shall be as I wish." So it was; and let us thank the poor mad king for it. Ludwig was in a sense the discoverer of Wagner. He was a poet who tried to make the dreams of poetry the realities of daily life. He lived in remote and marvellously beautiful castles which he had erected upon the crests of mountains, and was seen by his people only in fitful glances, dashing along through the night on a white horse, or glittering with gold-inlaid armour in the moonlight like a second Lohengrin. In time it was obvious that his mind had altogether failed. He was put under the charge of physicians, but escaped from them and cast himself into the lake. This was in 1886, three years after Wagner himself had gone to the great Beyond.

It would be superfluous to follow up the remaining details of the composer's career. Though comfortably settled, as we have just seen, a certain storm and stress accompanied him to the end. Three great works were still to emerge from his brain: *Tristan und Isolde*, the *Meistersingers*, and *Parsifal*. The first named came to him as a veritable inspiration, embittered though he then was with debts and disappointments, by a nervous illness, and by the imminent rupture of his home life. When he was sketching out the text, he wrote to Liszt: "As I have never in life felt the real bliss of love, I must erect a monument to the most beautiful of all my dreams, in which, from beginning to end, that love shall be thoroughly satiated." And *Tristan* was the result, the magnificent result, of this conception. Completed in 1859, it was not heard until 1865, when King Ludwig had it produced at Munich under Von Bülow's direction. It was received, the reports tell us, with "applause of the most vigorous kind": the first genuine success that had so far fallen to Wagner's lot.

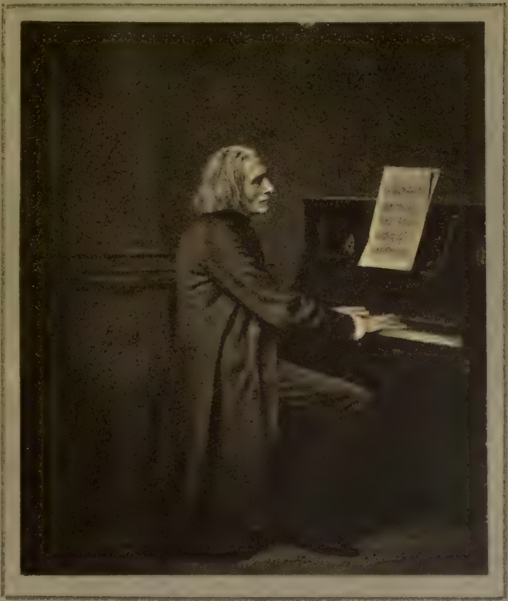
Then followed the now familiar *Meistersingers*, which was also produced at Munich (in June 1868), and again under the direction of Hans von Bülow—he whose divorced wife, a daughter of Liszt, was presently to become Frau Wagner. For poor Minna had now been dead two years, separated from her husband since 1861. The mother of Cosima Liszt was that Comtesse d'Agoult who wrote under the pen name of "Daniel Stern." Liszt lived with the Comtesse for a few years. Cosima married Bülow in 1857, and to Bülow Wagner was a god. Think, then, of the bitter joke which the Fates played on Bülow! Wagner had got Ludwig to make Bülow Court pianist and conductor at Munich, and here was the result. Bülow magnanimously forgave Wagner, but caustically expressed the wish that he had been another so that he might have shot him. The marriage took place in 1870, and proved entirely happy. Wagner himself wrote of Cosima as "her who was destined to show that I could well be helped, and that the axiom of many of my friends that I could *not* be helped was false. She knew that I *could* be helped, and she helped me. She has defied every disapprobation and taken upon herself every condemnation." Frau Wagner still (1909) lives, a sort of second Madame Schumann for her husband's interests.

In 1872 Wagner moved to Bayreuth, which was destined to be the home of his later years, the scene of such triumphs as he was to achieve during his life, and the last resting-place when all was over. Here a theatre was built solely for the performance of his works, in which one of his ideals was carried out of having the orchestra sunk below the stage level, and so invisible to the audience. The first performances given in this magnificent house were on a colossal scale, and the debt remaining over was equally colossal. To get in money a grand Wagner Festival, the composer himself conducting, was tried in London. The cult caught on, and Wagner returned with some solid cash in his pocket. But his work was almost done. *Parsifal* has been called his musical will. It was completed at Palermo in January 1882, only thirteen months before his death.

The call came to him very suddenly. In the autumn of 1882 he and his family (a son, Siegfried, had been born to him) went to Venice for a holiday. Wagner had been in poor health, and was suffering from a heart affection. He was perfectly careless about exertion, and he fell faint several times. On February 13, 1883, he rested till late. At noon he sent for the maid and ordered a light luncheon. Soon after it had been brought the maid heard Wagner call for her in a faint voice, and running into the room she found him in agony. "Get my wife and the doctor," he said. The wife reached his side in time to witness his last struggle; when the doctor came he was dead. Thus passed into the Eternal Silence the most stupendous musical genius of the last half of the nineteenth century. He lies where his faithful dog "Russ" had been laid, in the garden of his own house at Bayreuth—that Bayreuth which he declared to be the art centre of the world. His wife cut off her long blonde tresses, which he had so admired, and buried them with him as a final sacrifice. He died a disappointed man, though he died rich at last, with an income of £5000, and the ability to travel to Italy in a private car. What a change from the early days in Paris!

About Wagner the man there would be a great deal to say if there were space for it. One thing should be remarked, that he was probably himself largely to blame for the opposition and non-success which marked his career. He spared no one's feelings. He was vain of his own powers, and affected to be indifferent to the powers of some of his predecessors. He had no talent or patience for compromise; and he had few of those social qualities and graces that go to the making of friends and the conciliation of enemies. For the public, even the applauding public, he had little consideration, and sometimes scant courtesy. During the performance of *Parsifal* he interrupted the applause to point out that the work was not meant to rouse excited enthusiasm, and at the close, when acknowledging the plaudits of the house, he turned his back on the people and addressed a long speech to the performers.

To his friends and intimates he was no doubt different; but to the outside world he was arrogant, aggressive, contemptuous, sometimes positively rude. He was selfish too; and protested that the world should give him a gratuitous living "without asking anything in return beyond what I am actually doing"—that is,



LISZT

composing. When the world declined this high honour, he threatened to buy a pistol and put a stop to his existence. He certainly required money to keep him going, for he had the most expensive tastes. In a letter to Praeger he said: "By nature I am luxurious, prodigal, and extravagant, much more than Sardanapalus and all the other old emperors put together." Here he spoke the sober truth. His voluptuous tastes went far beyond a fondness for rich colours, for harmonious decorations, for out-of-the-way furniture, for well-bound books, and so on. He wore silken underwear at all times, and he employed a high-priced Viennese dressmaker to make the rich garments which he felt indispensable for composition. There is a story about him wanting some flamingo feathers before he could obtain sufficient inspiration to finish the flower-maiden scene in *Parsifal*. Any caller who had not seen him before was likely to suffer a mild shock; for on entering the room where his visitor was seated, Wagner would throw the door wide open before him, as if it were fit that his approach should be heralded like that of a king, and he would stand for a moment on the threshold, a curious mediæval figure in a frame. The mystified visitor, rising from his seat, would behold a man richly clad in a costume of velvet and satin, like those of the early Tudor period, and wearing a bonnet such as is seen in portraits of Henry VI.—his composing costume. He made "a veritable rainbow of himself, and even wore many-coloured trousers," says one.

Alexandre Dumas, calling upon him, made some good-humoured remark about his own ignorance of music; but his pleasantries were listened to with such a smileless stolidity that he went home in a huff, and wrote his contemptuous protest against "Wagnerian din—inspired by the riot of cats scampering in the dark about an ironmonger's shop." On the day before this protest was printed Wagner returned Dumas's visit, and was kept waiting half an hour in an ante-room. Then the author of the *Three Guardsmen* marched in, superbly attired in a plumed helmet, a cork life-belt, and a flowered dressing-gown. "Excuse me for appearing in my working dress," he said majestically. "Half my ideas are lodged in this helmet, and the other half in a pair of jack-boots which I put on to compose love scenes."

Wagner admitted frankly that his tastes were luxurious, but he held that luxury was a necessity to him as an aid to work. "I cannot live like a dog," he wrote. "I cannot sleep on straw and drink bad whisky. I must be coaxed in one way or another if my mind is to accomplish the terribly difficult task of creating a non-existent world." There is something unmanly about this perhaps, especially when we think of how little luxury Mozart and Beethoven and Bach and Schubert could afford themselves. But the individual is a law unto himself in matters of that kind; and if Wagner had not been able to indulge his expensive tastes we should probably have been without some of his greatest music-dramas to-day.

A CLUSTER FROM THE OPERATIC BRANCH

> What love is to man, music is to the arts and to mankind. Music is love itself—it is the purest, most ethereal language of passion, showing in a thousand ways all possible changes of colour and feeling; and though only true in a single instance, it yet can be understood by thousands of men—who all feel differently.—WEBER.

OPERA has a sort of separate history of its own. Certain composers have a "vein" for it, as we say, and practically confine themselves to it; other composers never touch it, or if they do, make no success of it. Bach did not meddle with the form at all. Beethoven made just one attempt with his *Fidelio*; Schumann also one attempt with his *Genoveva*. Schubert tried opera, but to little purpose. Handel and Haydn wrote operas which are completely forgotten. Mendelssohn made no effort in this direction (for the unfinished *Loreley* hardly counts); nor Chopin; nor Brahms. Wagner stands alone as the only really great composer who confined himself to opera—to music-drama, as he called it. And then there were the lesser lights, some of whom wrote opera only, while some took it as a by-path in the great field of musical form. To these lesser lights we shall give some attention now, ranging them conveniently under their nationality as German, French, and Italian. England does not claim any striking representative of opera, for though Balfe's *Bohemian Girl* remains as popular as ever, no one would dream of calling Balfe a great composer. Of course there is Sir Arthur Sullivan, but then it was comic operas, and very good ones, that he wrote.

GLUCK

In point of chronology, Christoph Willibald Gluck, the son of a German forester, was the first composer who really influenced modern opera, for he was born in 1714, and had begun to write before Handel gave up opera for oratorio. Gluck indeed came into direct conflict with Handel when he encroached on Handel's preserves in London in 1745. Handel, then at the height of his popularity, detested both Gluck and his music, exclaiming, "he knows no more counterpoint than my cook." As if counterpoint were essential in opera! Doubtless, as Elson says, Handel would have been surprised to learn that the later work of this intruder was destined to banish wholly from opera the intricate artificialities of his own contrapuntal writing.

But Gluck had no success in London in 1745, so he took his wounded vanity across the Channel. He had been thinking a great deal about opera, and gradually he arrived at the conclusion that the recognised Italian opera of the day was cast on totally wrong lines. It was "nothing but a more or less miscellaneous concert, with a thread of plot running through it." Gluck was a long time in putting his ideas into practice, but at last, in 1762, he brought out that history-making work, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, the principles of which were so well founded that it survives in active life even to the present Wagnerian days. "The story," to quote an authority, "is written in a broad and dignified manner, and the music rests on no artificial law, but is the natural expression of the emotions and situations found in the poem." Here is the significance of Gluck's reform in the evolution of opera. He was in reality the forerunner of Wagner in treating the opera as an integral whole; though Wagner had again to break the fetters that bound opera within the formal rules and conventions of the Italian school. This was due chiefly to the temporary eclipse of Gluck's reform by the "baleful genius" of Rossini, who "set back the hands of the clock of operatic progress by about half-a-century."

The reformer's way is hard, and Gluck suffered some bitter experiences by his bold defiance of tradition. He had been settled in Vienna for a time. From there he went to Paris, buoyed up by the expressed approval of his old pupil Marie Antoinette. Paris welcomed him at first: called him the Hercules of music, dogged his footsteps in the streets, and loudly applauded him at public assemblies. But this did not last. Paris was tied to the old operatic convention. A powerful opposition arose, and they imported the Italian Piccini, who, after a fortnight's downpour of rain, plaintively asked if the sun never shone in France. Piccini came as an exponent of the current style of Italian opera; and soon after his advent musical Paris was split up into two powerful factions, the Gluckists and the Piccinists. They fought with each other both by tongue and pen. Marie Antoinette was for Gluck, while Madame du Barri, the King's mistress, glad of an opportunity of piquing the Queen, was for Piccini.

"Women and men alike entered into the fray," says the Baroness Oberkirch. "Then were such passions and furies raised, that people had to be separated; many friends, and even lovers, quarrelled on account of this." Gluck said he knew one who would give dinners and suppers to three-fourths of Paris, to gain proselytes for Piccini. The quarrel even extended to the boards of the Opera. Then, when Mlle. Levasseur, as Alceste in Gluck's opera of that name, reached the words "You break my heart," one of the Piccini party cried, 'You break my ears," to which a Gluckist promptly replied, "What luck! for you can get a better pair." Gluck went on in the path of progress undismayed by all this; and when, in 1779, he produced his *Iphigénie en Tauride*, it created such a furore of enthusiasm in Paris that the rival composition of Piccini on the same subject, two years later, was consigned to oblivion. It is fair, however, to say that the ultimate failure of Piccini's opera was largely due to the prima donna appearing intoxicated at the second performance. About which incident Sophie Arnould, a rival singer, wittily observed: "This is not Iphigénie en Tauride, but Iphigénie en Champagne."

The triumph of *Iphigénie* practically closed Gluck's career. He was a wealthy man by this time, for he had made money by his operas, and had been handsomely pensioned by both Marie Antoinette and Maria Theresa. He retired to Vienna, to live a life of ease and—intemperance. He had always been fond of wine, and now his wife had constant anxiety about keeping the bottle from him. One day a friend came to dine, and liqueurs were placed on the table. The temptation was too strong. Gluck seized the bottle of brandy, and before his wife could stop him he had drained its contents. That night he fell down in an apoplectic fit, and he died November 25, 1787, aged seventy-three.

In his early days Gluck was handsome, vivacious, and witty, but as he grew older he changed considerably. His face was badly pitted with smallpox. Burney described him as "very coarse in figure and look"; but he was dressed, nevertheless, magnificently in a grey suit embroidered with silver, and carrying a heavy gold-headed cane. His nature was kindly, and there is a pleasant story of his asking young Mozart and his wife to dinner after applauding one of Mozart's symphonies in public. His method of composing has been described by Méhul, a brother musician, who watched him one day through an opening in a screen. Méhul says:

"He had on a black velvet cap of the German fashion. He was in slippers; and his stockings were negligently pulled over his drawers. As for the remainder of his dress, he had on an Indian jacket of a large flower pattern, which came no lower than his waist. I thought him superb in this accoutrement. All the pomp of Louis the Fourteenth's toilette would not have excited my admiration like the deshabille of Gluck.

"Suddenly I saw him dart from his seat, seize the chairs, range them about the room to represent the wings of a scene, return to his harpsichord to give the air, and there was my man holding in each hand the corner of his jacket, humming an air de ballet, curtseying like a young dancer, making glissades round the chairs, cutting capers, describing the attitudes, and acting all the tricks and pretty allurements of an opera nymph. He then appeared to wish to manœuvre the whole corps de ballet; but space failing him, he desired to enlarge his stage, and for this purpose came with a bang of his fist against the first wing of the screen, which suddenly opened—and lo! I was discovered."

WEBER

After Gluck comes Carl Maria von Weber, who was born at Eutin, a small town of Oldenburg, in 1786, and died in 1826. His father was a travelling actor, once a man of wealth and good social position, and it was his cousin, Constance, who married Mozart. Weber was an invalid from birth, and suffered all his life from disease of the hipbone, which lamed him badly. He could not walk till he was four years old. His chief teacher was that same Abbé Vogler who is the subject of Browning's fine poem. Mozart called Vogler a quack. He boasted himself that he could make a composer in three weeks and a singer in six months. He taught Meyerbeer, and he exclaimed more than once: "Oh how sorry I should have been had I died before I formed these two"—Weber and Meyerbeer. He certainly did well for both.

Weber wandered about a good deal in his youth, and at Breslau nearly destroyed his beautiful voice by accidentally drinking a glass of nitric acid. A curious episode in his life was his connection with the royal family of Würtemberg, where he found a dissolute Court, and a whimsical, arrogant, half-crazy king. Here he remained for four years, in a semi-official musical position, his nominal duty being that of secretary to the king's brother. He hated the king himself, who was so enormously fat that a space had to be cut in the dining-table to allow him to get near enough to feed. One day he had a stormy interview with his majesty, and revenged himself by ushering into the royal presence an elderly female whom he found inquiring for the Court laundress. The king, who hated old women, sent poor Weber to prison for this trick; and it is said that while there he got access to a wretched piano, tuned it with a door-key, and composed one of his best-known songs at it.

He settled down at Dresden in 1816, and it was there that he wrote *Der Freischütz*, the opera which brought him fame. When it was first produced in 1821 the entire German nation was "carried by storm, and the learned pundits of music looked on in amazement at the demonstration of popular feeling." Soon the opera was the rage everywhere. When it was at the height of its popularity in London, a gentleman advertised for a servant who should be unable to whistle its airs. Something of the same kind happened when *Oberon* was staged for the first time in London in 1826. Charles Kemble, the lessee of Covent Garden, had commissioned this opera (at £1000, too), and had given Weber three months to complete it. "Three months!" exclaimed Weber, who wrote slowly; "that will only afford me time to read the piece and design the plan." He took in reality eighteen months, and then he came to London to conduct the opera himself. The performance proved a great triumph. Weber wrote to his wife that the overture was encored, and every air interrupted twice or thrice with bursts of applause.

An interesting anecdote connected with the production was related some years ago by Mrs. Keeley, who, as Miss Goward, sang the well-known "Mermaid's Song" at the performance. The song was successively declined by two other vocalists; then Sir George Smart said: "Little Goward will sing it." And she did. The Mermaid had to sing at the back of the stage, where it was very difficult to hear the extremely soft accompaniment. At the first general rehearsal the effect was not quite satisfactory, and the stage-manager impatiently exclaimed: "That must come out; it won't go." Weber was standing in the pit, leaning on the back of the orchestra, and he shouted, "Wherefore shall it not go?" Then, leaping over the partition like a boy, he took the place of Sir George Smart, who was temporarily conducting, and thus saved the excision of this favourite song.

Schumann once begged an admiring correspondent not to place him between Beethoven and Weber, but somewhere near them, so that he might continue to learn from them. The conjunction of names sounds strange enough to-day; but *Oberon* and *Der Freischütz* attained a success that Beethoven never attained with his *Fidelio.* This was due largely to the fact that Weber caught the spirit of the romantic movement that was stirring Germany in his time, and gave it fitting expression in his music. The strongest feature of his works is their melodic flow, though his melodies are at times weak, sugary, and affected. The man himself is described as small and narrow-chested, with long arms and large hands; thin, pale, irregular face, with brilliant blue eyes; a "mighty forehead, fringed by a few straggling locks"; awkward and clumsy, but charming in spite of all. As opera director at Dresden, he wore a blue frock-coat with metal buttons, tight trousers, Hessian boots with tassels, a cloak with several capes, and a broad round hat—a truly operatic figure, one would say.

Weber's death was very tragic. It took place suddenly in London, after that first performance of *Oberon.* Like Chopin, he had long suffered from consumption, and like Chopin on *his* last London visit, he had often to be carried upstairs. People were so distressed by his coughing that they sent him presents of jellies, lozenges, and all sorts of chest remedies. He took it himself with a sort of grim humour. Thus he wrote to his wife that "Mr. Cough is very capricious, coming and going without any reason, but is a right good aid to early rising." His mother married when only sixteen, and died of consumption, so that the trouble was hereditary. Two days before his intended departure for Dresden, he went to bed at Sir George Smart's house, 103 Great Portland Street. He was very ill, and when he had wound up his watch he said to a friend: "Now let me sleep." Next morning he was found to have passed into his last sleep. They buried him in London; but two years later, mainly upon the initiative of Wagner, his remains were exhumed and carried for re-interment to Dresden.

MEYERBEER

And now follows Jacob Meyerbeer. Meyerbeer was disliked by Wagner because he was a Jew, and by Schumann because he wrote, not for art, but to curry favour with the public. In *Il Crociato* Schumann said he was inclined to place Meyerbeer among musicians; in *Robert le Diable* he began to doubt whether he had not made a mistake in so doing; in *Les Huguenots* he found that the music was best fitted for circus people! And yet *Les Huguenots* and *Robert le Diable* had both a long run of popularity, while *Il Crociato* was speedily forgotten. *Le Prophète* had less favour than its two companions just named; but the two efforts in the field of opera comique, *L'Étoile du Nord*, and *Dinorah*, were great favourites with a former generation.

Meyerbeer was born in Berlin in 1791, the son of a rich father, who had been in the sugar-refining business. There is here a parallel with Mendelssohn, the son of another moneyed Jew. Meyerbeer made large sums by his operas, and was probably the wealthiest of German composers. His mother used to say, apologetically: "He is a musician, but not of necessity." Mendelssohn's teacher, Zelter, gave him some lessons, and then he went to Darmstadt to study with Abbé Vogler. He gained his first distinctions as a pianist, but he took to opera, and achieved one or two triumphs in Italy in direct rivalry with Rossini. Rossini and he were good friends, all the same; in fact, when Rossini heard of his death he fainted away. There is a story to the effect that shortly after this event an amateur called to show Rossini an elegy he had written on Meyerbeer. "Well," said Rossini, after looking it through, "I think it would have been better if *you* had died, and Meyerbeer had written the elegy." It was Rossini's joke to say that he and Meyerbeer could never agree, because Meyerbeer liked sauer-kraut better than macaroni. Rossini, let it be understood, was prouder of his manner of cooking macaroni than of his compositions.

Meyerbeer settled in Paris after marrying his cousin, Minna Mosson. Here, though possessed of millions, he lived in an almost miserly style, with only one servant. If he had no need to be a musician he did not show it by his labours, which were as industrious as if he had been poor. "I am above all an artist," he said, "and it gives me satisfaction to think that I might have supported myself with my music from the time I was seven. I have no desire to stand aloof from my associates and play the rich amateur." Meyerbeer of course met Chopin in Paris. And he had good reason to like Chopin's music. He had one day a quarrel with his wife, a cousin, "sweet as she was fair." He sat down to the piano and played a Nocturne sent him by Chopin; the wife was so much taken with the piece that she went and kissed the player. Then Meyerbeer wrote to Chopin, telling him of the incident, and inviting him to come and witness the domestic calm after the storm. Meyerbeer died in Paris in May 1863. He was curiously afraid of being buried alive. In his pocket-book after his death was found a paper giving directions that small bells should be attached to his hands and feet, and that his body should be carefully watched for four days, after which it should be sent to Berlin, to be interred by the side of his mother.

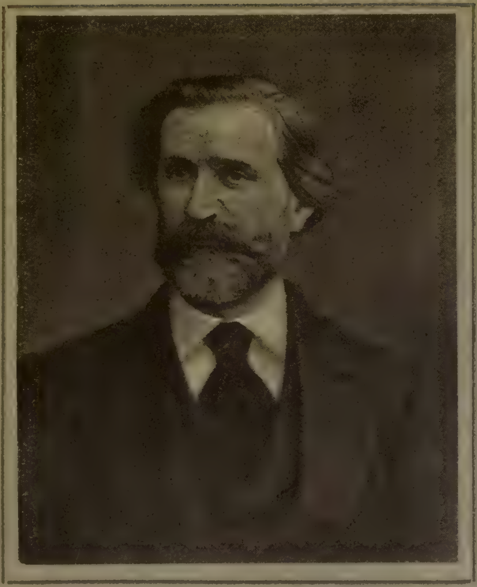
No composer's works have been more diversely criticised than Meyerbeer's. Berlioz called *Les Huguenots* a musical encyclopædia, with material enough for twenty ordinary operas. Another called it "banker's music"—luxury music for *la haute finance*. Wagner cried out against the blatant vulgarity of Meyerbeer's style, and described him as "a most miserable music-maker." But Wagner's antipathy to the Jews led him to the wildest exaggerations of criticism. After all is said and done, there is no denying that Meyerbeer's operas contain many passages of supreme beauty, and the best of them would well bear revival.

GOUNOD AND BIZET

Now we come to the Frenchmen. Here the great names, so far as surviving popularity is concerned, are Gounod and Bizet, the composers respectively of *Faust* and *Carmen*. But a word or two may be said about one or two of their predecessors. There was BOIELDIEU, for instance (1775-1834), whose *La Dame Blanche* not so long ago held a leading place in the operatic repertoire, and is still popular in France. Boieldieu was the son of a Norman family, but in Paris was obliged to tune pianos for a living, and was glad to sell his brilliant *chansons* for a few francs apiece. Then there was DANIEL AUBER (1784-1871), for many years director of the Paris Conservatoire. He devoted himself principally to opera, and had a big run of luck with *Fra Diavolo*, *Masaniello*, and *Le Domino Noir*. Rossini had a very poor opinion of his work. "You know what pretty dance tunes Auber has always written," he sarcastically said, the fact being that Auber never wrote any dance tunes. On the other hand, Wagner—even Wagner—highly praised *Masaniello*, especially its instrumentation and its dramatic choral effects. Auber was unique in never attending the performance of his own works. He was noted for wit, and many of his *bons mots* are recorded. While directing a musical *soirée* when over 80, a gentleman having taken a white hair from his shoulder, he said: "This hair must belong to some old fellow who passed near me." Then, still later, came AMBROISE THOMAS (1811-1896), who began by imitating Auber, but soon struck out a style of his own, as we see in the popular *Mignon*, the only one of his baker's dozen of operas which has survived. The dainty gavotte from *Mignon* is as familiar as anything of its kind. These and other opera composers of lesser note lead us directly up to Gounod.

Ignaz Moscheles, the great pianist, wrote in 1861: "In Gounod I hail a real composer. I have heard his *Faust* both at Leipzig and Dresden, and am charmed with that refined, piquant music. Critics may rave if they like against the mutilation of Goethe's masterpiece; the opera is sure to attract, for it is fresh, interesting work, with a copious flow of melody and lovely instrumentation." It is close on fifty years since that was written, yet *Faust* is to-day the only serious rival to *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, and *Carmen*. Gounod wrote in all departments of music, but it is by his *Faust* that he will live. His other operas, with the single exception of *Romeo and Juliet*, have not enjoyed any measure of popularity.

Charles François Gounod was born in Paris in 1818, and died there in 1893. Like Bizet and Berlioz, he carried off the Prix de Rome at the Conservatoire, and his three years' stay in Rome fostered in him a



VERDI

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powerful religious sentiment. In fact he came very near entering upon a monastic life. The religious fervour returned to him in his old age, when he produced the oratorios *The Redemption* (for which a London firm paid him £1000) and *Mors et Vita.* His first operas failed completely, and this temporarily drove him back to sacred music. *Faust*, however, written when he was forty, changed all that. Strange to say, no manager would at first produce it, and no publisher would bring out the score. A publisher was found at last who bought it for 10,000 francs, and by so doing laid the foundation of the fortunes of his house. In thirty years the modest sum he timidly advanced brought in nearly three million francs. The manager who did finally agree to stage the opera was less fortunate. He had faith in its final triumph, and pushed it on to a fifty-seventh performance, at which point he failed and the theatre was closed. It is staggering to think that the public of that time were so long in waking up to the fact that here was a work of beauty and charm, destined to live. But what could be expected of the public when Berlioz (jealous, of course) declared that Gounod had not the smallest conception of the subject he sought to treat? One music critic cynically said that *Faust* had only a waltz and a chorus; another hoped that Gounod would never repeat the experiment. We wish he had!

Of later years the greatest French name in opera is that of Bizet. Everybody who knows anything about opera knows *Carmen.* It is one of the surest "draws" in the manager's list. And the sad thing is that Bizet died only a few months after its successful production, and while it was still impossible to forecast the brilliant career in store for it. Though Bizet had written a great deal before he wrote *Carmen*, he had never really tasted the sweets of success; and he went to his grave much as Keats went—his end hastened by the rebuffs and disappointments which he had experienced.

Georges Bizet, who came of a musical family, was born in Paris in 1838. He could distinguish the degrees of the scale before he knew the alphabet. His father wanted to send him to the Conservatoire, but the rules would not admit one so young. Rubinstein and Liszt had both been refused admission when Cherubini was head, because Cherubini detested prodigies. However, Bizet's father resolved to interview the director on the subject. "Your child is very young," said the official, casting a supercilious glance at the boy. "That's true," replied the parent, "but if he is small by measurement, he is great in knowledge." "Really! And what can he do?" "Place yourself at the piano, strike chords, and he will name them all without a mistake." Georges Bizet did, and the rules of the Conservatoire were relaxed for once.

He made a brilliant student and carried off prize after prize. He played the piano so well that even Liszt praised him. He won the coveted Prix de Rome, and that took him to the Eternal City for three years. When the time was up, he had to get his living, and he did it very much as Wagner had done in that same gay

Paris. He composed "pot-boilers" of all kinds. "Be assured," he wrote to a friend, "that it is aggravating to interrupt my cherished work for two days to write solos for the cornet. One must live." Again he tells that he is working fifteen or sixteen hours a day; more sometimes, for he has lessons to give, proofs to correct. Once he says he has not slept for three nights. Such was the hard fate of the composer of *Carmen*. Alas! he fell just when victory was within his grasp. *Carmen* had been produced at the Opéra Comique, Paris, on the 3rd of March 1875; and on the 3rd of June Bizet lay dead. The hour of midnight sounded when his heart ceased to beat, far away in the country; and in Paris they were lowering the curtain on the thirty-third performance of the dead man's masterpiece.

ROSSINI

So much for the Germans and the Frenchmen. Three popular masters of Italian opera were all working about the same time: Rossini (1792-1868), Donizetti (1797-1848), and Bellini (1802-1831). The most distinguished of the trio was, of course, Rossini. He had a tremendous vogue at one period, and even overshadowed Beethoven. His first great success was with *Il Tancredi*, which took Venice by storm in 1813. This was followed by many other operas, notably by *The Barber of Seville* and *William Tell*. Rossini had a fatal facility of composition, and the number of his operas, mostly forgotten now, is prodigious. His music is brilliant, but often devoid of dramatic significance.

The man himself was more interesting. He was of low parentage—the son of a village inspector of slaughter-houses. The father got into prison for some political offence, and young Rossini was given over to the care of a pork-butcher. He was born on February 29, in leap year. This meant a birthday only once in four years, and when he was seventy-two he facetiously invited his friends to celebrate his eighteenth birthday. He was a great humorist, and hundreds of good stories are told about him. Prince Poniatowski, the composer of the popular "Yeoman's Wedding Song," had written two operas, and wanted very much to have Rossini's opinion as to which of the two he should choose for production. Rossini reluctantly consented to hear the composer play them through. He settled himself in his easy-chair and placed a huge handkerchief over his eyes. Poniatowski sat down to the piano and worked away lustily for an hour or so. When he was about to begin on the second opera, Rossini awoke from a doze into which he had fallen, and touched him lightly on the shoulder so as to arrest his progress. "Now, my friend, I can advise you," he said sleepily: "have the other performed." A kindred joke was tried on Liszt. Liszt had just played one of his so-called "symphonic poems" to Rossini. "I prefer the other," said Rossini laconically. Liszt naturally inquired which "other." "The chaos in Haydn's *Creation*," was the withering reply. Rossini had scant respect for amateur composers. One such sent him the manuscript of his latest composition, accompanied by a Stilton cheese. The composer hoped, of course, for a letter praising his work. The letter came, but all it said was: "Thanks! I like the cheese very much." An amateur drummer once came to Rossini pleading for an engagement at the Opera. He had brought his instrument with him, and Rossini said he would hear him "play." It chanced that the piece selected had a rest of seventy-eight bars, and the drummer naturally proposed to skip these. "Oh no," said Rossini; "by all means count the seventy-eight bars; I particularly wish to hear *them.*" There are many stories connected with *William Tell.* It was always too long, and even in Paris, soon after its production, the management began to perform only one act at a time. "I hope you won't be annoyed," said the manager one morning to Rossini, "but to-night we propose to perform the second act." "What, the whole of it?" Rossini asked in reply. He was altogether an original character. Sir Arthur Sullivan once found him writing a piece for his dog's birthday. Like Ruskin, he was opposed to railways, and used to transport himself about in a caravan. He was as fat as Falstaff himself, and was a prodigious snuffer. All his life he had a dread of the number thirteen, as well as of Fridays. He would never invite more than twelve guests to dinner, and when once he had fourteen, he made sure of an "understudy" who would at a moment's notice have been ready to come should one guest have failed him. And, though this was a double superstition, he died on Friday, November 13 (1868)

BELLINI AND DONIZETTI

After the production of *William Tell* at Paris in 1829, Rossini ceased to write for the stage; practically ceased, in fact, to write music at all. That he should suddenly retire from public life before he had reached his prime and when his fame was at its zenith, is a phenomenon difficult to explain except by his own statement that he had "a passion for idleness." His withdrawal was, however, a boon to Bellini, and also to Donizetti. It gave them both a chance, of which they made the best use. Bellini and Donizetti were very minor stars compared with Rossini, but they shared much of his popularity. Only twenty-five years ago it was written in a certain dictionary of music: "Of the masterpieces of Bellini and Donizetti it is surely unnecessary to speak, since they still hold firm possession of the stage, and are not likely to be soon replaced by newer favourites." It is never safe to prophesy unless one knows. Wagner has cut into Bellini and Donizetti, as into others of their school, and neither managers nor public at present show any great enthusiasm for Bellini's *Norma*, *La Sonnambula*, and *I Puritani*; or for Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Favorita*, and *La Fille du Régiment*. Other times, other music.

Yet it is very curious to recall the fact that Wagner praised Bellini's *Norma*, and selected it for his benefit at Riga in 1837. On the playbill he wrote this: "Of all Bellini's creations *Norma* is that which unites the richest flow of melody with the deepest glow of truth, and even the most determined opponents of the new Italian school of music do this composition the justice of admitting that, speaking to the heart, it shows an inner earnestness of aim." Rossini also liked *Norma*. Bellini had a pathetically brief career. He died when he was only thirty-three, while a brother, a fourth-rate church composer, lived to be eighty-two.

Though born at Bergamo, Donizetti was of Scottish descent. His grandfather was a native of Perthshire, named Izett. The young Scot was beguiled by the fascinating tongue of a recruiting-sergeant into His Britannic Majesty's service, and was taken prisoner by General La Hoche during the latter's invasion of Ireland. Already tired of a private's life, he accepted the situation, and was induced to become the French general's private secretary. Subsequently he drifted to Italy, and married an Italian lady of some rank, denationalising his own name into Donizetti. No composer except Mozart had a more remarkable musical memory than Donizetti. Wishing to procure for Mayer a copy of an opera which was being performed at Bologna, and which the impresario refused to lend, Donizetti had such a lively recollection of the music after hearing it two or three times that he was able to put it down on paper from beginning to end. When composing he always kept a small ivory scraper near his hand, though he never used it. It was given him by his father when he began his career, with the injunction to write as little rubbish as possible. The scraper was meant, no doubt, for making frequent corrections. But Donizetti seldom bothered about corrections. He was one of the rapid composers. Some merry friends were spending an evening with him at Rome in 1833. Suddenly he withdrew from the room, but returned in half an hour. "Why did you leave us?" he was asked. "I have composed the finale of the first act," was the reply. *Lucia*, which Rossini considered his masterpiece, was written in six weeks.

Great composers become attached to their pianos, instruments which more or less help them in their creations. Donizetti was no exception. In 1844, having gone to live in Vienna, he made arrangements to sell off the furniture in his house at Naples. "But do not at any price," he writes, "sell the piano, which contains in it my whole artistic life. It has sounded in my ears since 1822. Oh let it live so that I may live! With it I passed through the period of hope, of conjugal life, of solitude. It has witnessed my joys, my tears, my illusions, honours; it has shared with me my toils and fatigues; in it lives every epoch of my career." This belauded instrument, it may be added, is now in the care of the municipality of Bergamo. Donizetti, like Schumann, fell into melancholy. In fact symptoms of dementia appeared, and he died from a second shock of paralysis.

VERDI

It is a far cry from Bellini and Donizetti to Giuseppe Verdi, who was, nevertheless, their legitimate successor in opera. Verdi used to be called the Grand

Old Man of music, and such indeed he was, for he lived to be eighty-eight. Born at the village of Roncole, near Parma, within a few months of Wagner, he survived Wagner for eighteen years. His operatic career was divided broadly into two great periods, with an interregnum, during which he wrote nothing. And here is the phenomenon: that he blossomed out in his old age with a style of opera so totally different from the works of his first period, so much grander and more artistic, as to make us almost regard him as two different composers. *Il Trovatore* and *La Traviata* were among the early works which received the applause of the public and held their own, the first especially, until quite recent years. Then, when Wagner's influence began to be felt in opera, Verdi regenerated his style and produced *Aida*, which replaces the meaningless trivialities and vocal fireworks of the first Verdi operas by a dignity, a power, and a majesty that still procure it the favour of cultivated musical people.

It was after *Aida* (for which he received £3000) that Verdi took his long rest. Sixteen years passed, and then he began to sound the depths of his genius. First, in 1887, when he was seventy-four, came *Othello*; and next, in 1893, when he was eighty, *Falstaff*. Just think of it—the very finest of a long line of operas produced when the composer was fourscore! It was even said that Verdi would have written still another Shakespearean opera but for the awful labour of putting so many notes on paper. He used to work eight hours at a stretch and feel all the better for it, but at eighty an hour tired him.

His vitality was no doubt due to the simple life he had always lived. His people were poor—the father kept a small inn—and for long he was poor himself. He played the organ in the village church for six years, and his salary was less than £5. He married very early, and after five years was bereft of wife and family almost at a single stroke. His bambino fell ill first, and died in the arms of his mother, who was beside herself with grief and despair. That was not all. A few days after, his little daughter sickened, and her complaint also terminated fatally. But *this* even was not all. A few weeks later the composer's young life-companion was attacked by acute brain fever, and soon a third coffin was carried from the house. "I was alone! alone!" wrote Verdi. "In the space of about two months, three loved ones had disappeared for ever." And in the midst of this terrible anguish, to avoid breaking an engagement, he was compelled to write and finish a comic opera!

Fortunately Verdi's finances prospered. His operas paid him from the first, and with *Il Trovatore* his fortune was made. Theatre after theatre produced it after it was first heard in Rome. At Naples three houses were giving it at the same time. The composer bought a fine country estate in 1849, and there he continued to live in almost complete seclusion. He was not, one gathers, a very genial person. At a rehearsal of *Falstaff* the artists gave him an ovation when he entered. "I thank you all," he said, "but will thank you more if you do better in your performances than last time." He was not enthusiastic over his fellow-composers of the younger school. Mascagni ventured to ask if he would attend the first performance of his *Ratcliffe*. "No," he replied. "If I did, everybody would want to know next day what I thought of it, and I really shouldn't know what to say." An experience of Leoncavallo was not much happier. Verdi did go to a rehearsal of one of Leoncavallo's operas, but all he said was, when the composer was pointed out to him: "Oh, so Leoncavallo is the young fellow in the light overcoat."

There are stories which show Verdi in a better light. This one, for instance, connected with the production of *Aida* at Milan: A certain person named Bertoni went from a neighbouring village to hear the opera. His outing, including supper, cost him 15 francs 19 centimes. He happened not to like *Aida*. However, next day, finding it praised on all hands, he resolved to give it another trial. This time he spent 20 francs, and was more dissatisfied than ever. Full of anger, he wrote to Verdi telling him that the opera was a failure, doomed to early oblivion, and asking for the return of 35 francs 90 centimes, which sum, he alleged, he had wasted in going to hear it. Verdi was not offended in the least; in fact, he sided with the aggrieved one. Taking a pen in hand, he authorised his publisher to send Bertoni 31 francs 50 centimes, adding: "It is not quite so much as the gentleman demands, but then he could have had his supper at home." The story may not be true, but, as a witty Frenchman once said of a similar tale, *Si non è Verdi è ben Trovatore.* Verdi is charged with having been very parsimonious; but if that were really the case, he has the thanks of his own class, for he left his fortune, £120,000, to the home for aged and indigent musicians which he had already founded at Milan.

STARS AMONG THE PLANETS

> Music, oh how faint, how weak,
>   Language fades before thy spell!
> Why should Feeling ever speak,
>   When thou canst breathe her soul so well?
>
> MOORE.

OF the great composers who have been dealt with in separate chapters, the nineteenth century gave us Wagner, Schumann, Chopin, and Mendelssohn. But these names by no means exhaust the list of that century's notables to whom music owes debts in various degrees and kinds. There were other stars, of lesser magnitude to be sure, but still stars. Perhaps among them we should reckon a few of the men who linked the eighteenth century with the nineteenth. Curiously enough, these were nearly all associated with the piano.

Clementi.—Taking them in their order of birth, there was first Muzio Clementi (1752-1832), author of the famous *Gradus ad Parnassum*, and of so many studies that it was jokingly asserted not long ago that the commission appointed to count them had not yet arrived at the total. Upon the *Gradus* to this day the art of solo piano-playing rests; while the twelve

Clementi Sonatinas are as well known to young pianists as anything ever written for the instrument. Clementi lived through the most memorable period in the history of music. At his birth Handel was alive, and before he died Beethoven, Schubert, and Weber were buried. One writer says he was "chiefly notable for his miserly qualities, by which he rendered miserable three successive wives." Anyway, he was a prince among teachers, and during his long stay in England he greatly influenced the art of piano-playing in the country. His grave is in Westminster Abbey.

Pleyel.—The name of Ignaz Pleyel (1757-1831) is also familiar to the piano student. He was born near Vienna, the twenty-fourth child of a poor schoolmaster, and for five years he resided with Haydn, who gave him board and instruction. In 1795 he went to Paris and established first a music firm (Kalkbrenner, who proposed to teach Chopin, was a partner) and then a piano factory. The Pleyel pianos became quite celebrated. Chopin had one in his rooms. At one time Pleyel's works took complete possession of the public ear; in fact, for ten years at least, "only for them was there a market." It was very funny, but to stem the tide of Haydn's popularity, the Italian faction in London imported Pleyel to conduct rival concerts. Haydn kept his temper, and wrote: "Pleyel behaves himself with great modesty. I go to all his concerts and applaud him, but his presumption is a public laughing-stock." Far different were the amenities that passed between Haydn and Giardini, another imported rival.

"I won't know the German hound," exclaimed Giardini. "I attended his concert at Ranelagh, and he played the fiddle like a hog," said Haydn.

Dussek.—Then, still following chronological order, there was J. L. Dussek (1761-1812), who takes a still higher position in the classical piano school. After many wanderings on the Continent, he, too, tried publishing in London, but the business failed and plunged him into debt. At last, in 1808, he entered the service of Prince Talleyrand, in Paris, and re-established his finances. Dussek, as Riemann says, was one of the first, if not the first, to make the piano "sing." Though they are not often heard in the concert room, his piano compositions have life in them yet, and are distinguished by their noble, pleasant character. It is interesting to know that most of the music of *Don Giovanni* was composed when Mozart was on a visit to Dussek, whose house was a scene of great resort and revelry while Mozart was his guest.

Cramer.—Yet another name connected with music publishing. The firm of Cramer and Co. still flourishes. It was founded by that J. B. Cramer (1771-1858) whose *Studies* have achieved immortality and made his name a household word. He was a German, a pupil of Clementi, but he established himself in London after gaining Continental fame as a pianist. He wrote many things for the piano, but nothing to match the *Studies*, the poetical spirit of which has always made them agreeable to both pupils and teachers. There is a very good story of Cramer. Once, when filling a professional engagement at Manchester, he went to dine with a friend and greatly praised a dish of turnips on the table. Not long after, Cramer received a letter from his host saying that he had sent by waggon a present of "a few turnips." The present arrived—a whole hogshead of turnips—and Cramer had the felicity of paying two guineas for the carriage.

Hummel.—Cramer had a rival as a pianist, and his name was J. N. Hummel (1778-1837). Hummel received his early lessons from Mozart, and was, like Mozart, a prodigy at the keyboard. Later on he came into contact with Beethoven, whom he was considered to excel as an extemporiser. As has been mentioned, he was also for some time Beethoven's rival in love, having married a sister of the singer Roeckel, to whom Beethoven was greatly attached. Latterly, he renounced playing in public, and devoted himself almost entirely to composition and teaching. It is recorded of him that he was in the habit of wearing a small velvet cap when in his study composing. One day a gentleman called on him to inquire his terms for teaching composition, and after being satisfied on that point, asked Hummel why he continually wore his velvet cap. Hummel, a bit of a wag, having, we may suppose, already taken his visitor's measure, said that he could not compose a bar without it, for he never felt inspired until he had donned his cap. Next morning the gentleman came, according to arrangement, for his first lesson. Hummel provided him with ruled paper and pen and ink, and was just about to begin his instructions, when the pupil drew from his pocket a handsome velvet cap, a long gold tassel depending therefrom. Popping this on, he exclaimed, "Now for it!" with great energy. Hummel smiled, but allowed his pupil to enjoy his imaginary inspiration throughout the lesson. Whether the pupil came again history sayeth not. One or two of Hummel's compositions survive, but his style is rather old-fashioned and lacking in passion.

Czerny.—Of Carl Czerny (1791-1857) what shall be said? Pianists innumerable, amateur and professional, have been tortured by Czerny's *Exercises* or his *School of Velocity*. There never was such a man for writing exercises and studies. It is said he wrote one every day. But the best of them are very good indeed, for Czerny "understood better than any one else the simple primitive forms from which all piano passage-writing is evolved." He had himself been taught by Beethoven; and in his turn he helped to make such giants of piano technique as Liszt and Thalberg. Liszt used his studies until the very last for technical purposes. Leschetizky, Paderewski's teacher, also uses Czerny almost exclusively with his pupils. The last time Liszt visited Vienna before his death, he was at Leschetizky's villa. His playing even then was wonderful, and Leschetizky took occasion to ask him how he kept his technique. "I will tell you," he said: "I practise the Czerny exercises a good half-hour every day." Czerny lived practically all his days in Vienna, teaching and composing.

Moscheles.—Finally among the piano-virtuoso composers comes Ignaz Moscheles (1794-1870), whose *Studies* (Op. 70) remain to this day a standard work, though his piano pieces and concertos have mostly gone to oblivion. As a juvenile, Moscheles played so well that he was noticed by Beethoven, but he was twenty-six before he made a sensation on his recital tours. He settled for a time in London, where he was much sought after as a teacher; but when Mendelssohn established the Leipzig Conservatorium he tempted Moscheles to take a professorship, and he continued in this post to the end of his life. He was one of Mendelssohn's most intimate friends. They would often extemporise together, "throwing a theme to right and left as if it were a shuttlecock; here holding it in bonds, there developing it on classical lines; now causing each other merriment by the conflicting harmonies, and again playing with four hands, but only one soul." There is an amusing story of their hiring some chairs for a village concert. Mendelssohn said they were for the great pianist Moscheles; but the mercenary inn-keeper said that great pianists had a way of giving concerts, pocketing the money, and disappearing. Cash down was demanded and paid, and the loading up of a cab with chairs made a sufficiently diverting picture. Moscheles and Chopin were friendly, and the two were once invited to play before Louis Philippe. The king sent Chopin a gold cup and saucer, and to Moscheles a travelling-case, "the sooner to get rid of him," Chopin jocularly said.

Cherubini.—Such were the notable pianist composers who bridged the two centuries. If we add to the list the names of Cherubini (1760-1842), often mentioned in former chapters, and Spohr (1784-1859), we shall be ready to take up the nineteenth-century men proper. Cherubini had the distinction of being described by Beethoven as "the most estimable of living musicians," but he was a somewhat pedantic person, and we associate his name chiefly with church music and with his theoretical treatises, though his opera *Les Deux Journées* once had some vogue. Chopin described him as a mummy. He had pride and dignity, and could snub even the mighty Napoleon. The pair were once seated in the same box, listening to one of Cherubini's operas. Napoleon's taste was for the suave and sensuous style, and at the close of the performance he turned to Cherubini and said: "My dear Cherubini, you are certainly an excellent musician; but really your music is so noisy and complicated that I can make nothing of it." To which Cherubini replied: "My dear General, you are certainly an excellent soldier; but in regard to music, you must excuse me if I don't think it necessary to adapt my music to your comprehension." This was almost as bold as Liszt's declining to continue his piano-playing before the Czar, because the Czar had dared to talk while the great man was at the keyboard. But the proud Cherubini never learned to "crook the pregnant hinges of his knee" to the man who made Europe tremble.

Spohr.—Ludwig Spohr, a native of Brunswick, was a great violinist rather than a great composer, though his two violin concertos are sometimes chosen by virtuosi for the display of their skill, and his oratorio, *The Last Judgment*, is occasionally performed. He travelled about a good deal, and paid a visit to England at the invitation of the Philharmonic Society in 1820. It was on the occasion of this visit that he made the first use in England of the now familiar conductor's baton. He was anxious to make an impression on the Londoners, so before he set out for the concert he put on a bright red waistcoat. "Scarcely had I appeared in it in the street," he says, "than I attracted the attention of all who passed The grown-up people contented themselves with gazing at me with looks of surprise; but the urchins were loud in their remarks, which unfortunately I did not understand, and therefore could not imagine what it was in me that so much displeased them. By degrees, however, they formed a regular tail behind me, which grew constantly louder in speech and more and more unruly. A passer-by addressed me, and probably gave me some explanation, but as it was in English I derived no benefit from it." Poor Spohr, thus persecuted, made for the house of his friend Ferdinand Ries, when Mrs. Ries explained to him that a general mourning had been officially ordered for George III., whose death had recently taken place, and therefore that the red waistcoat had acted as a red rag to sorrowing John Bull!

Now we will take a quartet of stars, and once more, with one exception, in the order of their birth.

BERLIOZ

Hector Berlioz had a curious and indeed a tragic career. He was an innovator, and he was never understood. His operas were kept off the stage by Wagner's music dramas, while his symphonies and his religious works suffered under the double misfortune of difficulty and eccentricity. He made himself enemies all along the line. As a student, he was wayward, pugnacious, and cursed with that sardonic humour which makes foes among fools. He did not reverence his professors at the Conservatoire, and he had a poor opinion of contemporary French and Italian composers. Open enemies and secret ill-wishers surrounded him on every hand. He said many things that music had not said before; and he, and he alone, brought French music at a bound into line with all the new work that was being done elsewhere in poetry, in prose, and in art.

But he threw away almost his last chance by the enormous demands he made upon players and conductors. It is this which specially characterises Berlioz as a composer. Big things, and particularly big, horrible things, had a fatal fascination for him. The ordinary orchestra, the ordinary chorus, the ordinary concert room, would never do for him; everything must be magnified, as it were, beyond life-size. He once talked of an opera in which a wicked King was to arrange a burlesque of the Day of Judgment, only to have his performance interrupted by the real coming of Christ and the blast of angel trumpeters. He heard children singing in St. Paul's Cathedral, and had a vision of devils burlesquing the scene in hell! His mind seemed steeped in horrors. Wagner said of him: "He lies buried beneath the ruins of his own machines." Heine's estimate of him is well worth quoting: "A colossal nightingale, a lark the size of an eagle, such as once existed, they say, in the primitive world. Yes, the music of Berlioz in general has for me something primitive, almost antediluvian; it sets me dreaming of gigantic species of extinct animals, of mammoths, of fabulous empires with fabulous sins, of all kinds of impossibilities piled one on top of the other; these magic accents recall to us Babylon, the hanging gardens of Semiramis, the marvels of Nineveh, the audacious edifices of Mizraïm." After all, Berlioz was one of the big men who compel not only admiration in what they achieve, but sympathy in what they aim at and fail to compass. His very exaggerations dispose one to like him, he was so desperately in earnest, and often where he fails he commands the respect due to an intrepid voyager in strange lands.

Hector Berlioz was born at Côte St.-André in December 1803. His father was a doctor and an opium eater, and the general opinion is that to the opium-eating should be attributed much that was unbalanced and morbid in the son. The father wanted him to be a doctor, but he rebelled. "Become a physician!"

he cried; "study anatomy; dissect; take part in horrible operations? No! no! that would be a total subversion of the natural course of my life." So, much against his parents' wishes, he went to Paris, and, amid many trials and privations, studied at the Conservatoire. Later on, like so many more composers, he went to Italy to complete his training. From Rome he was recalled in a very amusing way. It was almost a necessity of Berlioz's nature that he should be in love, and his passions were of such heat and fervour that they rarely failed to carry him beyond all bounds of reason.

It was so now. He heard that a frivolous and unscrupulous Parisian beauty, who had bled his not overfilled purse rather freely, was about to be married. The news should have given him joy, but, instead of that, it set up a spirit of revenge, and he hurried off to Paris with loaded pistols, not even waiting for passports. He attempted to cross the frontier in women's clothes, and was arrested. A variety of *contretemps* occurred before he reached the capital, and by that time his rage had cooled and the pistols were thrown aside. The incident is thoroughly characteristic of Berlioz.

It was shortly after this that he saw a pretty Irish actress on the stage, and fell hopelessly in love with her. A romantic passion it was, and it dominated Berlioz's life. Harriet Smithson was playing Shakespeare, and for Berlioz she became a celestial divinity, a lovely ideal of art and beauty, a personification of the transcendent genius of the dramatist. To win her for himself became the end and aim of Berlioz's existence. His first step was to give a concert, at great expense, at which he hoped she would be present. But, alas! the concert turned out a fiasco, and the adored one was not there. Berlioz was in utter despair. But luck was yet to favour him, and in a most unexpected way. Miss Smithson became involved in pecuniary difficulties; and, to make matters worse, she met with an accident which prevented her again appearing on the stage. Now was the composer's chance. He had no great means of his own, yet he at once offered to pay all the lady's debts, and, of course, to marry her as well. She accepted him; but, alas! with the marriage came the end of the romance. She who had once been an angel now turned out a shrew. She had a vile temper, was fretful and peevish, and by and by became obsessed by an ungovernable jealousy, for which there was no cause. At last, unable to endure the torture any longer, Berlioz arranged a separation, and to the end provided for her wants with scrupulous fidelity.

Two of Berlioz's greatest works—the *Symphonie Fantastique* and the *Romeo and Juliet* symphony—were directly inspired by his passion for Harriet Smithson. The first won him his wife. It also won him the handsome pecuniary reward of 20,000 francs, paid him out of sheer admiration by the weird, gaunt, demon fiddler Paganini, of whose "dark flowing hair" Leigh Hunt sings. He wrote in almost every branch of composition, but his skill lay in the marvellous way in which he developed the resources of the orchestra. In number of parts and instruments employed, his *Requiem* is the most ambitious score in existence.

Writing of his life in Paris in 1837, the late Sir Charles Hallé gives this little sketch of Berlioz, then a young man of thirty-four: "There never lived a musician who adored his art more than did Berlioz; he was, indeed, 'enthusiasm personified.' To hear him speak of, or rave about, a real *chef-d'œuvre* such as *Armida*, *Iphigénie*, or the C minor symphony, the pitch of his voice rising higher and higher as he talked, was worth any performance of the same. And what a picture he was at the head of his orchestra, with his eagle face, his bushy hair, his air of command, and glowing with enthusiasm. He was the most perfect conductor I ever set eyes upon, one who held absolute sway over his troops, and played upon them as a pianist upon the keyboard."

For a genius of his rank, Berlioz had extraordinary limitations. He was no executant upon any instrument (for being able to strum a few chords on the guitar does not count), and he was painfully aware how much this was a hindrance to him and to his knowledge of musical literature, which indeed was limited. Hallé was often astonished to find that works familiar to every pianist were unknown to him—not merely works written for the piano, such as Beethoven's sonatas, of which he knew but few, but also orchestral works, oratorios, etc., known to pianists through arrangements. Perhaps many undoubted crudities in his work would have been eliminated had he been able to hear them before committing them to paper, for the eye alone was not sufficient to give him a clear idea of the effect of his musical combinations. Berlioz died in 1869. He had married a second time, but he outlived his wife, and latterly had to be taken care of by his mother-in-law.

BRAHMS

Writing from Düsseldorf in 1853, Schumann said: "We are now living in a very musical age. A young man has appeared here who has impressed us most deeply with his wonderful music, and who will, I am quite convinced, make a great sensation in the musical world." And in a letter to Joachim, bearing the same date, he writes: "I do think that if I were younger I might indite a few polymeters on the young eagle who has flown across from the Alps to Düsseldorf so unexpectedly. Or he might be compared to a splendid river which, like Niagara, is at its grandest when thundering down from the heights as a waterfall, bearing the rainbow in its waves, its banks courted by butterflies, and accompanied by nightingales' songs. Well, I think Johannes is the true apostle, who will write revelations which many Pharisees will be unable to explain, even after centuries." Five days later follows another letter to Dr. Härtel, dwelling on the genius displayed in Brahms' compositions, and adding "he is also an extraordinary player."

All this about a composer who is now looked upon by many earnest musical students as the only legitimate successor of Beethoven. And certainly if any one can fairly claim to have taken up music where Beethoven laid it down, it is Johannes Brahms. He was bred, in a musical sense, upon Bach and Beethoven, with whom Von Bülow coupled him to make a holy trinity of music, "the three B's." But the worst of it is that he lacked the appealing emotional sense of both Bach and Beethoven. His music, fine and solid as it is, somehow fails to inspire us. He is at least not welcome to the coteries of whom it has been sung that they,

Fast bound at their suburban level,
Still suffer qualms because of Brahms,
And wish all Wagner at the devil.

Some of his admirers put his piano pieces above even those of Chopin; but it would be easy to show that Chopin is not only more artistic but more scientific in his harmonies—that Brahms violates not only art and taste, but acoustics as well. His antiquated chord groupings might have been tolerable on the old harpsichords, but on the sonorous modern piano they are too often clashing and discordant. Much of his piano music sounds muddy, and some of it is positively ugly. Even his orchestral music is austere and "grey." One of his biographers extols him for his superiority in never worrying about trifles of composition, "often cutting knots which might better have been untied." This evidently refers to the slovenly modulations and the juxtaposition of incongruous keys, which, if found in another composer, would be instantly condemned. Nevertheless Brahms was a great composer, and it is just possible that in not fully appreciating him now, we are in the position of the poor blind people who did not appreciate "Mr. Van Beethoven." Only time can tell.

Brahms' biography need not detain us long, for his career was one of the least eventful that the history of music can show. He was born at Hamburg in 1833, and died at Vienna in 1897, having lived there very quietly for thirty years. He made a very successful public appearance when he was fourteen, but after that he went into retirement and studied hard for five years more. Then he toured, as a pianist, with Remenyi, the eccentric Hungarian violinist. Early in the tour Remenyi took him to see Liszt. Liszt sat down to play some of his own works, and turning round after a time, he beheld Brahms comfortably asleep in an armchair!

It was at Göttingen in 1853, during this tour, that a turning-point in Brahms' career occurred. He was to have played Beethoven's *Kreutzer* sonata with Remenyi, when it was discovered, to the latter's horror, that the pianoforte was a semitone below pitch and that he would have to tune his fiddle down. Brahms, however, came to the rescue and offered to play the pianoforte part in B flat, the original key being A. This he did without book, and it was a feat that none but a musician of extraordinary ability could have accomplished. Joachim, who was present, was so impressed with the promise of the young man, two years his junior, that he wrote to a friend: "Brahms has an altogether exceptional talent for composition, a gift that is enhanced by the unaffected modesty of his character. His playing, too, gives every presage of a great artistic career, full of fire and energy, yet, if I may say so, unerring in its precision and certainty of touch. In brief, he is the most considerable musician of his age that I have ever met." Brahms did not, however, make any great mark as a pianist, the fact being that his retiring nature made him averse to playing in public.

Brahms never touched opera, which he might so well have done with his great gifts as a song writer and his vast knowledge of the resources of the modern orchestra. His own favourite opera was *Carmen*, but he disliked opera on principle, and when he went to hear one, generally left after the first act. He told Hanslick that it would be as hard for him to marry as to write an opera. In passing, it may be noted that Brahms admitted he *might* have married when he was a young man if his compositions had not then been received with such frigid indifference. He said he could not bear to have a wife pity him for his non-success. Some wealthy Viennese women set their caps at him, but he remained obdurate. In his later years he was lonely and without blood relations of any kind.

As man and musician Brahms had many of the characteristics of Beethoven. He was "arbitrary in musical matters, rough in his ways, furiously severe with any who trifled with music." With almost clumsy modesty he approached the piano or the conductor's desk; unwillingly and shyly he responded to the stormy recalls, and could not disappear again quickly enough. He had a holy horror of functions and formality, and hated getting into a dress-coat. Even friends sometimes complained of his coldness. Once at a soiree he took leave of the guests with the words: "I beg pardon if perchance I have offended nobody to-day." Again, when an importunate hostess who had been pestering him to play had at last induced him to sit down at the piano, he struck a C sharp in the treble, and a C natural in the bass, and after hammering them together several times, exclaimed with pretended indignation: "How can you expect me to play on a pianoforte so terribly out of tune?" At the same time, when he chose, no one could excel him in the art of graceful compliments. Thus he inscribed on Madame Strauss' fan a bar or two of her husband's *Blue Danube* waltz, with the words: "Unfortunately, not by Johannes Brahms."

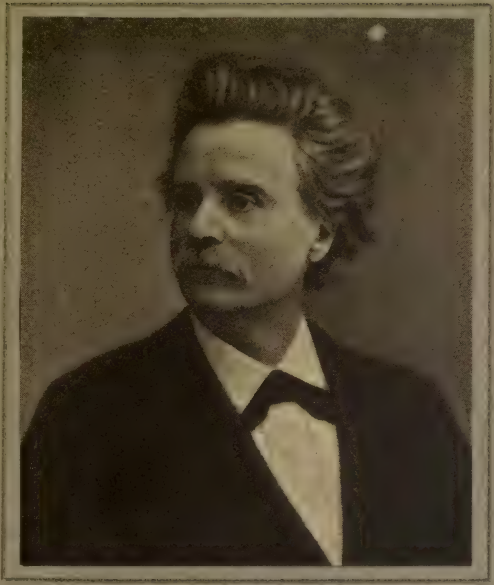
In appearance Brahms, like Beethoven and Wagner, was short of stature, with a stout and stumpy figure, which led a French visitor to compare him with a barrel. But the ungainliness of his figure was redeemed by a splendid head and commanding features, stamped in every line with force and character. He lies at rest in a grave of honour between the tombs of Beethoven and Schubert, and not far from where Mozart must lie. He was one of the very few composers who, beginning life with nothing, died rich, having left the comfortable fortune of £14,000.

GRIEG

To the musical amateur of to-day, no recent composer is better known than Edvard Grieg. Every school girl plays his smaller piano pieces; young violinists study his melodious sonatas; and few concert numbers are more popular than the *Peer Gynt* suite. These, with his songs and his romantic pianoforte concerto, are so well known and admired that there is no need to dwell on their merits. It was at the suggestion of Ibsen himself that Grieg wrote the incidental music for the production of *Peer Gynt* at the Christiania Theatre; and from it he selected portions for the popular suite. "Write how you like, only put devilry into the music," said the author to the composer. Ibsen was so pleased with the result that, in 1876, he arranged with Grieg for the setting of a libretto which had been lying by him for several years, but the project was never carried through.

It is a remarkable fact that both Grieg and Ibsen, the most prominent men in latter-day Norwegian music and letters, traced their descent from Scottish ancestors. Ibsen's remote ancestors came from Fifeshire; and in Mr. Finck's recent volume on Grieg it is shown that the composer's grandfather, Alexander Greig, was an Aberdeen merchant. Alexander Greig was concerned in the "bonnie Prince Charlie" business of 1745, but managed to escape to Bergen, in Norway, as other rebels did. He changed the spelling of his name to Grieg, to suit the Norwegian pronunciation, and became a Bergen merchant. His son John took up the business, and was made British Consul at Bergen. John's son, Alexander, was also merchant and Consul, and was the father of the composer. Grieg knew all about his Scottish ancestry, and he was deeply interested in Scottish national music, in which he traced many of the characteristics of that of his beloved Norway.

Grieg was born at Bergen in 1843. He desired to become a painter, but the famous Norwegian violinist, Ole Bull, recommended that he should be sent to Leipzig Conservatoire to study music, for which he had shown an aptitude. Shortly before his death he wrote an account of his early days, in which he said : "I could go very far back, back to the earliest years of my childhood. Why should I not go right back ? What should hinder me from recalling the wonderful mysterious satisfaction with which my arms stretched out to the piano to discover—not a melody ; that was far off ;—no ; it must be a harmony, first a third, then a chord of three notes, then a full chord of four ; ending at last, with both hands,—O joy ! a combination of five, the chord of the ninth. When I found that out my happiness knew no bounds. That was indeed a success ! No later success ever stirred me like that. I was about five years old." These juvenile attempts at harmony are of special interest in the case of Grieg, for next to his gift of melodic invention are the romantic harmonies with which he clothes and delicately colours his musical thoughts.



GRIEG

He says himself that he got little professional good at Leipzig. But this was probably his modesty. Even in his last year he wrote: "What I have accomplished in large and small works signifies for me personally a continual development, and yet, unfortunately, I am conscious never to have reached what I have striven for. So to-day I cannot name a single work as truly a first composition. What remains to me is to contemplate the wandering through art and life as the prelude to that true first-work, of which, on earth, I am only able to dream." In 1867 Grieg married his cousin, Nina Hagerup, a gifted vocalist, with whom he gave concerts in Christiania while yet a struggling musician. Shortly afterwards he made the acquaintance of Liszt, who did much to bring his genius the recognition it deserved. Grieg soon became known in Germany, France, Britain, and America, and to-day he occupies the highest position among Norwegian composers.

His death occurred so recently as September 1907, just as he was making preparations for a professional visit to England. The last evening he said to his nurse: "I am not able to sleep: I shall have another restless night." Later on, feeling that he was dying, he said to his wife, who for thirty years had been his faithful and sympathetic companion: "So this is the end." Men and women of all classes in Bergen felt his loss as a personal one. He had long suffered from poor health, and had lived for thirty years with one lung. He would have travelled much more as an artist, but he could not stand climatic changes, and the sea was a terror to him

Once he crossed from Bergen to Aberdeen to see the home of his ancestors. "I shall never forget that night of horrors," he said. To get to England from Bergen, he travelled through seven countries and crossed at Calais to have as little of the sea as possible. But he came to London more than once, and was always received with great cordiality. He was a man of very simple tastes and habits, with a trace of superstition which made him always keep a mascot in the shape of a doll on his writing-desk. The best description of his appearance is that set down by Tschaikowsky, who met him in 1888, when he was forty-five. During a rehearsal which Tschaikowsky was conducting—"There entered the room a very short, middle-aged man, exceedingly fragile in appearance, with shoulders of unequal height, fair hair brushed back from his forehead, and a very slight, almost boyish beard and moustache. There was nothing very striking about the features of this man, whose exterior at once attracted my sympathy, for it would be impossible to call them handsome or regular; but he had an uncommon charm, and blue eyes not very large, but irresistibly fascinating. I rejoiced in the depths of my heart when we were introduced to each other and it turned out that this personality which was so inexplicably sympathetic to me belonged to a musician whose warmly emotional music had long ago won my heart. He proved to be the Norwegian composer, Edvard Grieg." Thus Tschaikowsky; and Tschaikowsky is the last of our quartet.

TSCHAIKOWSKY

It is not without design that we bring our record to a close with his name. We hear it continually said—not with much truth, so far as one can see—that melancholy is the *maladie du siècle*; and the contention is that Tschaikowsky's music is popular because it expresses, as no other music does, this pessimism of the age. Certainly Tschaikowsky *is* a master of grief, of what Ossian calls "the luxury of woe." He supremely recognised that his art was the expression of emotion; and "since he was oftenest sad, 'twas oftenest that he spoke sad things." His flight was towards the west, towards the darkling things, the day's death, the coming of night, the mystical interlude between the life that was and the life that is to be. In his final utterance, it may be said of him that his wing lingered in the night-time, and when the arrows of the sun shot shyly over the edge of the eastern sea Tschaikowsky was gone: his day was done in an ultimate utterance of musical grief.

Practically speaking, though he wrote many more things, and some very fine things too, Tschaikowsky is known, and will probably always be known, almost solely by his *Pathetic* symphony; just as Gray is known solely by the *Elegy in a Country Churchyard.* And considering the present popularity of the *Pathetic*, it is curious to reflect that it is not so long since Tschaikowsky was only a name in England. He had visited England twice or three times; but, as a cynical critic puts it, he had not written any piece without which no orchestral programme could be considered complete. However, when his fame became great, and spread on the Continent, he assumed such an importance in the eyes of English musicians that Cambridge University honoured itself by making him a Doctor of Music. The bestowing of this distinction served a useful purpose by calling public attention to the fact that there was living a man who had written music that was fresh, a trifle strange perhaps, but full of vitality, and containing a new throb, a new thrill. Since 1893 his reputation has steadily grown ; but if he had not written the *Pathetic* symphony he would have been no better known now than he was then. That great work caught the public fancy, and the public fancy still upholds it.

Peter Ilyitch Tschaikowsky was born in a small Russian town in 1840, the son of a well-to-do mining and military engineer. He took to music late, like Wagner, and was twenty-three before he began to study instrumentation. All through his youth he was "indolent, popular, fond of society, a graceful amateur who played *salon* pieces at evening parties." But once embarked on his musical career, he attacked his studies with even furious ardour. He often worked all night ; and Rubinstein, who taught him composition at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire, tells how, on one occasion, he submitted no fewer than 200 variations on a single theme. He made such progress, indeed, that when only twenty-six he was appointed a professor at the Moscow Conservatoire. But none of his compositions obtained any success until he was well over thirty.

Then, in 1877, came his mysterious and unhappy marriage. A young woman, very poor, declared her love for him; and in a mood of Quixotic chivalry, purely out of sympathy, he married her, though he did not love her. He tried to argue the girl out of her infatuation by describing minutely his character, his irritability, his diffidence, the unevenness of his temperament, and so on. It was all in vain. Tschaikowsky was in despair. "To live," he said, "for thirty-seven years in congenital antipathy to marriage, and then suddenly to be made a bridegroom through sheer force of circumstances, without being in the least charmed by the bride—that is something horrible." Truly! And the result was horrible. After the marriage the pair returned home only to part. Tschaikowsky stayed away for a month, and then tried the life *à deux* again. The attempt lasted only for a week. He determined to kill himself, and stood up to his chin in the river one frosty night, "in the hope of literally catching his death of cold, and getting rid of his troubles without scandal." He fled to St. Petersburg, where his brother stood by him for forty-eight hours while he lay unconscious. The doctor said travel was necessary. The wife was provided for, and leaving her for ever, Tschaikowsky fled to foreign countries, barely in time to save his sanity. That is all that we know, so far, of the strange story. There must be more to tell in explanation of a freak so wild and apparently unnatural, but we must wait.

In course of time Tschaikowsky pulled himself together, and it is to the fruitfulness of his quiet, later years that we owe such of his works, in addition to the *Pathetic*, as have the slightest chance of surviving. After his period of travel he lived almost a hermit. His end, humanly speaking, was as sad as his career. During the cholera season in St. Petersburg, when the water was more or less contaminated, he drank a glass of unfiltered water, and very soon thereafter was struck down with the disease. When he was dying, in terrible agony, he thanked all about his bedside for the consideration they showed him. He turned to his nephews, after an unusually severe attack of nausea, with the exclamation: "What a condition I am in! You will have but little respect for your uncle when you think of him in such a state as this." So Charles II., with his historical "I am afraid, gentlemen, I am an unconscionable time a-dying."

Thus passed away, in the October of 1893, the most characteristic of the moderns of musical composition. The beauty of much of his work is seductive, but better perhaps is the more equable beauty of Bach and Mozart.

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